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GRAND PRIX

INTERNATIONAL

SAFARI RALLY

Toyota does the double

BRAZILIAN GP

Prost and McLaren start all over again

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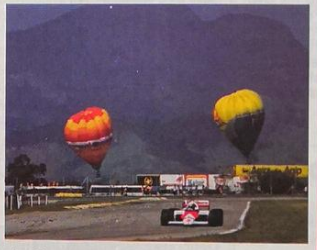

The first round of the 1985 F1 World Championship took place on April 7 at Rio de Janeiro. GPI was there to give full coverage of what happened. Formula One is still as unpredictable as ever...

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PROFILE

This month, Harry Roberts spoke to Frenchman Jacques Laffite. Now in his 12th year of F1, Jacques reveals some of the trials and tribulations behind the scenes.

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Pierre Dieudonné flew across the Channel with Thierry Boutsen in reply to Arrows's invitation to track test last year's Arrows A7 at Donington.

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What makes IMSA the success it is, from both the competitive and financial points of view. Plus Sebring results — there's no stopping Porsche!

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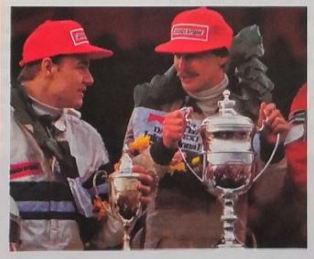
FORMULA 3000

GPI reports on the first two rounds of the new and epic Formula 3000 Championship held at Silverstone and Thruxton.



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SAFARI RALLY

Round four of the World Rallying Championship. One of the most coveted titles — the Safari; a tough test to sort the men from the boys as they bolt along the gruelling but scenic Kenyan dirt tracks.

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TOPICS

The first edition of the Hong Kong - Pekin Rally will be held in September. Eighty competitors can take part in the 3,400 km/2,125 mile rally which will be crossing through China.

The third round of the Middle East Rally Championship, the Bahrain Rally, which was due to take place from April 25-26, has been cancelled as a result of administrative problems.

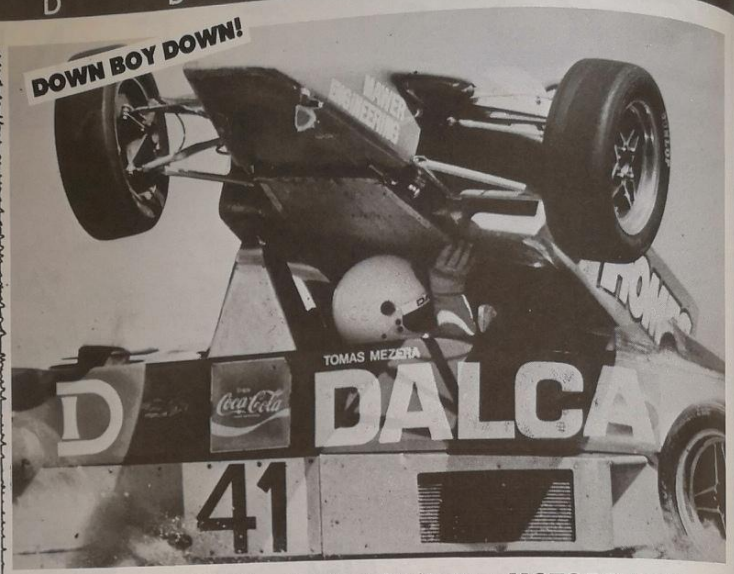
Denny Hulme the former 1967 F1 World Champion recently sent a telex to Snobeck Racing Service enquiring on how to prepare a Group A Mercedes to rally on the Australian continent.

Financial problems for the Nashville (Tennesee) circuit organisers means that the two NASCAR rounds scheduled for May and June, will not be taking place. The NASCAR Championship now only comprises 28 races.

Johnny Ceccoto is recovering well from his accident at last year's British Grand prix. The ex-World Motorcycle Champion is expected to be fit enough by the mid-season to take part in ETC races at the wheel of a Schnitzer BMW 635.

Teo Fabi has joined the Lotus/Winkelmann team to take part in the CART series this year. He will have Willy T Ribbs as team mate.

DOWN BOY DOWN!



Thomas Mezera (Reynard No 14) was happily minding his own business as he lapped his way round Australia's Keilor Park circuit (east of Melbourne) at a Formula Ford round, when lo and behold Geoff Walter suddenly made a dramatic entrance into his life! Here Mezera is seen trying to protect himself as Walter's Bowin rears over the poor chap. He was extricated from his fate by marshals who reported the young man was uninjured but had experienced the biggest fright of his life! (Photo Vandystadt)

CAPELLI SOON TO JOIN F3000

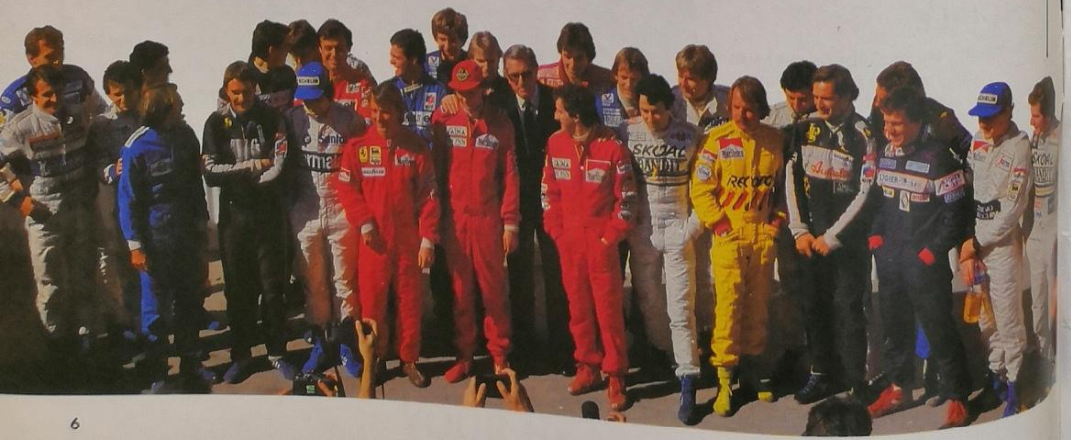
The reigning European Formula 3 champion Ivan Capelli was not able to take place in the first two rounds of the first-ever Formula 3000 Championship as he is doing his national service in Italy. He will, however, be at the Portuguese round to be staged at Estoril at the wheel of a March 85G.

STEFAN'S SHOES

Timberland, the American shoe company will be sponsoring 28-year old F1 driver Stefan Johansson throughout the 1985 season. Timberland real leather shoes are fashionable and renowned for their ruggedness and durability as well as being elegant and fashionable for both male and female customers. An interesting if paradoxical detail is that Timberland soles are made by Goodyear ! Half a loaf is better than no loaf...

MOTORSPORT AND DRUGS

The three international motorsport federations convened a meeting at Monte Carlo on March 27, 1985, during which it was decided to establish a medical code to govern the FISA (auto) UIM (power boats) and the FIM (motor bikes) by the international motorsport safety commission of the AGFIS (Association Générale des Fédérations Internationales de Sports).
The main issue concerned anti-doping measures in view of the increasing number of drugs available on the market for all types of sport. It appears that drugs are becoming increasingly 'popular' in all forms of motorsport.



THE MAKING OF TEN

With the Formula One Grand Prix season upon us once again, teams from Britain, France, Germany, Italy and the United States jostle for publicity. Their sponsors are often large multinational corporations which identify with the 'high tech' image of this widely-televised sport.
Williams Grand Prix Engineering Limited with their sponsor Mobil commissioned Uden Associates Limited to produce a short, punchy documentary on the technology of their new 1985 car — the Canon-Williams FW10.
The film reveals the monocoque carbon-fibre construction, Honda V6 turbo engine and the careful attention to the manufacture of the parts which are all made at Williams' Didcot factory and laboratory complex. It contains interviews with car designer Patrick Head, aerodynamicist Frank Dernie and team boss Frank Williams.
Shot on 16mm Eastmancolor neg and available on 1" or BVU, the film is already in high demand from US cable distributors and British TV sports producers for its unique technical footage.
For more information telephone Uden Associates Ltd, 01 351 1255.

US ISLAND FOR 1986 DETROIT GP?

It is highly probable that the 1986 Detroit Grand Prix will not be staged on the current street circuit but on an entirely different one as a result of the city centre becoming congested with traffic as roads are shut off. Talks are taking place for the North American round to be held on Belle Isle, a small island on Lake Huron, just off the Detroit coastline.

NAKAJIMA TO TEST WILLIAMS-HONDA

Japanese Formula 2 champion Satoru Nakajima has been named as the Williams-Honda test driver. His job will mean testing the British constructor's car in Japan where further development will be carried out on the Honda engine. An FW09 chassis has already been flown out and he will be testing at home wherever Keke Rosberg and Nigel Mansell are unavailable.

PESCAROLO TO LANCIA FOR LE MANS

Martini Racing driver Henri Pescarolo's secret to race at the Le Mans 24 Hours was divulged by a certain friend who couldn't keep the news to himself! Pescarolo still hadn't signed a contract with Porsche for a complete season in the 1985 WEC and therefore accepted Cesare Fiorio's offer to drive a works car just for the famous French event. The Frenchman is also due to take part in the Japanese Sports Car class series for five rounds at the wheel of a private LC3.

DANNER GETS CAR HIRE

Christian Danner's team clinched a last minute sponsorship deal with Budget-Rent-a-Car which enabled him to take part in the opening round to the new Formula 3000 Championship staged at Silverstone in March and then at Thruxton a fortnight later. Bob Sparshott's BSA team welcomed this arrangement most warmly especially in view of the fact that Christian had only driven a flat-bottomed single seater once before, and that was last November.

BOOK REVIEW AUTOCOURSE 1984-1985

A colourful and comprehensive retrospective look at the 1984 F1 season through Hazleton Publishing's annual Autocourse. There are 256 pages full of exciting photos by some of the best international photographers such as Nigel Snowden, Diana Burnett, Bernard Asset, to name but a few. Full F1 coverage by the best journalists includes 16 race and practice reports with detailed and accurate results, times and statistics, specifications and a complete technical review. Autocourse also gives a run-down on the US, Endurance F2, F3 and Sports Cars series with more dazzling illustrations. An absolute 'must' for all motor racing fans, Autocourse contains a wealth of information to interest the truely passionate lovers of the sport.
Autocourse is published by Hazleton Publishing and is priced at £15.95. NH

CHALLENGING TRADITION

Like most of you, we at GPI are avid magazine readers. When we find ourselves in exotic countries, for example Brazil, we enjoy picking up local motoring publications to see what they have to say about the state of the sport. You may be interested to know, therefore, that Brazil's best-selling monthly car magazine confidently stated in its April issue that Alain Prost's chances of winning the 1985 World Drivers' Championship weren't even worth considering.
Two pieces of convincing but theoretical evidence were proffered by the Brazilian writer for his prediction. First, he pointed out, it is almost 20 years since any F1 team pulled off drivers' championships in two successive years. Second, he said, Prost — being French — is fated never to win the title which has evaded him and so many of his countrymen since the FIA established the various World Grand Prix Championships in 1950. However, after the commanding performances put in by Marlboro-McLaren and Alain Prost at Rio, we can hardly wait to see what our Brazilian colleagues will be writing next month...
It is a reflection of the exceptionally high standards which obtain in F1 racing that the constructors' "double" has not been achieved since Brabham did it in 1966/67. While it is perhaps more difficult to explain the elusiveness of the drivers' championship insofar as the French are concerned, Prost was clearly intent in the Brazilian GP on ensuring that the jinx is no more than temporary.
While Prost and McLaren were starting the F1 racing season in Rio as they obviously intend to end it (see page 10 of this issue), a 26-year old Finn named Juha Kankkunen was making his mark for Toyota on the Safari Rally in Kenya (see page 68). Perhaps Alain Prost and McLaren can draw some encouragement from the African Rally result, for it was not until 1972, 20 years after the first Safari, that Hannu Mikkola broke the grip that Kenyan drivers exerted on their local event. However strong tradition may be, there is no earthly reason why the right man in the right car should not defeat it. GPI

FISA RULE CHANGES

FISA have announced plans to change the coefficient equivalences between normally-aspirated and turbo engines. At present it stands at 1.4 in Rallying and in F1 it is at 2.0 (but this ruling will no longer apply in 1986 when normally-aspirated engines will be made illegal). The Rallying coefficient is expected to rise to 1.7 to put normally-aspirated engines on more of an equal footing with their turbo counterparts. It is a shame that FISA will not be going a step further to increase the coefficient to 2.0 or perhaps establish a weight scale for both normally-aspirated and turbo power units.

At present the Peugeot 205 Turbo 16 is entered in the 2001-2500cc class for a minimum weight of 890 kilos. If the 1.7 ruling is applied, it moves into the 2501-3000cc class where the minimum weight is 960 kilos. The 205 Turbo 16 has never weighed in at less that 980 kilos. The Ford RS 200 will have to face up to a considerable weight problem as a result of this rule change. It weighs in at a hefty 1,100 kilos, far off the planned 960 kilos limit. There is too much of a difference between the minimum weight limit for the less than 3-litres cars (960 kilos) and those over 3 litres (1,100 kilos).

FROM ITALY

Attilio Bettega's going to be an extremely busy man once the Costa Smeralda Rally is over. From there it will be on to the Tour de Corse for the Italian followed by the Golden Sands Rally in Bulgaria, the Acropolis and the Ypres 24 Hours. He will be at the wheel of a Scuderia Tre Gazelle Lancia Rally sporting the colours of West for all the aforementioned rounds with the exception of the Tour de Corse where he will be taking part in a Martini-backed car.

NO HOPE FOR HARALD

Harald Demuth has failed to finish in any of the three European Rally Championship rounds in which he has taken part. While leading the Spa Rally his Schmidt prepared Audi Quattro let him down when the electrics went depriving him of an easy win. On the Costa Brava and RACE Rallies he was the victim of an accident on both occasions.

600 BHP FOR OPEL

The 4wd Opel prototype has already been through 200 km of testing. "House" driver Rauno Aaltonen insisted that although the car bears a strong resemblance to the new Kadett, "*it is a true competitions rallier, like the Peugeot Turbo 16 or the Lancia Delta.*"

The engine is placed over the front axle, longitudinally (or north-south) and is said to muster 600 bhp.

Opel's technicians still consider their new engine as being an experimental one as the final version is going through the development stages. No confirmation has been given as to whether the power unit on the prototype is the 4-cylinder Zakspeed currently featured on Capris competing in the German National Circuit series. Opel engineer Karl-Heinz Goldstein denied rumours, but he didn't have much option.

Following the preliminary tests, the power divider has been set at 30/70% and 50/50%.

The four wheel transmission unit on the Opel has been designed by an ex-Hewland engineer who also designed the 4wd Rallycross Ford Escort for the Norwegian Martin Schanche.

HONG KONG-PEKIN RALLY

The Hong Kong-Pekin Rally will definitely be taking place. The organisers have announced that the start of the European-type event will be held on Sunday September 15 with the finish on Thursday September 19 at Pekin.

The special stages will mostly be run over loose gravel whereas the link up routes will comprise both gravel and asphalt sections. As travel in China is strictly controlled the actual route of the 3,400 km/2,125-mile Rally will be revealed just prior to the start and the back-up vehicles, too, will have to follow a set route.

Ex-co-driver Jim Porter the route organiser of the RAC Rally is the master mind behind the event. Jim has no end of possible itineraries, China being such a vast country. He guarantees that the crews will be running over some breathtaking scenic regions, especially in remote areas where foreign visitors are not usually allowed. Jim Porter revealed that the mountainous southern stages will be fast, very similar to the New Zealand terrain. As the Rally makes it way towards the north and Pekin, the roads will become straighter. In all, competitors will cross through six Chinese provinces.

For more information please write to: Rally Office, Hong Kong AA, Marsh Road, Wanchai New Reclamation, Hong Kong.

NEW 205 FOR CORSICA

Peugeot Talbot Sport driver Bernard Darniche has been testing the latest off-spring of the 205 whilst the others were busy at the Safari. PTS are expecting the car to be homologated by mid-April so that it can be rallied as from May 1. The main modifications include the strengthening of the wishbones and shock absorbers together with the adding of secondary fuel tanks to provide an extra 80 litres. The 350 bhp engine has otherwise remained much the same.

FAST MICKY

Massimo Biasion has high ambitions for the Tour de Corse. As he knows he is particularly fast on asphalt he is going over to the French island for a whole month's recceing and has no regrets whatsoever of giving the Costa Smeralda Rally a miss although it is a round of the European championschip with a coefficient of 4. Micky is the present leader of the European Rallying series and he clinched the title in 1983, but now he would like to take part in the world championship.

But, is a weight scale really necessary? Isn't that part of the reason why constructors resorted to turbo technology in the first place? Wouldn't it be simpler to establish a minimum authorised weight scale for all the cars aiming at the classified results according to the safety parameters on a particular event (Group Bs over 300 bhp for example).

Whatever the final outcome the constructors' body, the BPICA, demand that sufficient time be given before the ruling comes into effect especially since 200 models have to be constructed in order to compete in World Rally Championship rounds.

totip
totip
totip

PROST OFF WITH A BANG

FRENCHMAN ALAIN PROST WON FAIR AND SQUARE AT THE FIRST ROUND TO THE 1985 FORMULA ONE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP, NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. BUT THIS YEAR THE BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX LEFT A DISTINCT IMPRESSION OF *DEJA VU* IN MANY PEOPLE'S MINDS.

by Patrick Camus

TEAM BY TEAM

MCLAREN

First official appearance of the new MP4/2B. It differs from last year's version visually and in two other ways: the rear suspension is push rod operated without rockers, the side pods have also been shortened by 10 cm. Before the cars were shipped to Rio, Lauda put in some laps at Donington just to check that everything was at it should be!
Lauda had the MP4/2B-01 and Prost the 02 with the 03 as the spare car.

TYRRELL

Tyrrell's future 014/Renault engine project is well underway with preliminary tests planned for mid-May. Until then he will continue using the good old 012s which have remained unchanged since last year despite Ken's saying that he's modified a number of points. The only visible change is the fitting of a flexible front portion which has entailed the redesigning of a narrower nose cone.
Brundle had the 012/6 and Johansson the 7 with the 5 as the spare care.

WILLIAMS

Frank and his team went to the Rio preliminary tests with two FW09s from last year and as they were behind on the FW10 development schedule, they gave the Imola tests a miss. Mansell only put in a handful of laps at Donington in icy conditions. As they didn't have time to complete three chassis, the spare car was an FW09. "*We are feeling fairly hopeful*", admitted Ken, "*but, we realise that we're up against some tough customers. I just hope that the first round will prove that all the work we've put into the development programme and design has been worthwhile.*" The most interesting difference compared with last year's car is that the turbo gets its air through upper air inlets of the Schorkel/Ferrari type.
Mansell had the FW10/02, Rosberg the 01 with the FW09/8 as the spare car.

BRABHAM

Brabham put in over 16,000 km of testing over the winter and several hundred hours were also spent through various wind tunnels to produce one of the smartest cars in the paddocks. Everything has been the subject of close attention and the overall effect is extremely pleasing to the eye. It is remarkably narrow. In 'hot country' configuration, water sprays are fitted in front of the intercooler.
The cars no longer sport the Italian dairy conglomerate Parmalat colours (although their PR man went over). Another Italian company Olivetti backs the car and from France, Pernod which can be read on the rear wing, but you have to look hard.
Piquet had the BT54/3 and Hesnault the 1 with 2 as the spare car.

RAM

In spite of all the effort from McDonald and his men RAM went to Brazil with only two new 03s. Winkelhock had the 02 and Alliot the 01. The 01 will in fact be used as the spare car for the next round at Estoril and Philippe will then be driving the 03/03. Following the preliminary Rio tests, Gustav Brunner put in a great deal of work to solve the engine cooling problem. The steamlining was redesigned and the radiators and intercooler were made larger. A water spray system was designed to further cool the intercooler. Alliot's car also featured a wierd device: a satellite water radiator placed to the rear, under the wing. Although it may not be exactly aerodynamic, it is efficient until another solution is found. The drivers will also be testing different sized turbos (in diameter).

LOTUS

The stunning black cars were the same as those first seen at private testing. Nothing had been modified. But everyone knows that Ducarouge has been concocting a new revolutionary rear wing which will make its appearance on the track if needed.
In the Lotus pits, they had taken a page out of Brabham's book and had come along with two rear track-gearbox-engine units in case something broke down.
De Angelis had the 97T/3, Senna the 2 with 1 as the spare car.

RENAULT

Nothing new on the Régie's cars since the Imola tests where new rear suspension was sighted as well as the bulky extractor under which the spaghetti-like exhaust system has been refitted.
Like all Renault's customers, the V6 EF4B was being used for practice. Warwick was given the responsibility of being the first to try out the EF15 during Saturday's sessions and for the race itself.
Tambay had the RE60/04 and Warwick the 03 with the 02 as the spare car.

ARROWS

The Arrows certainly wins the prize for being the gaudiest car in the paddock! The lower portions have been daubed blue in the colours of the Italian electric radiator company Delonghi, ex-Tyrrell, and is set off by the cream and brown of Barclay. At least they don't go unnoticed! Technically, however, the A8s at Rio were the same as those at Imola, but a new suspension unit has been planned for either Estoril or San Marino. "*We hope to be among the ten fastest qualifiers,*" Jackie Oliver said. "*If all goes well during the race, we should be in the points.*"
It should be remembered that Arrows have bought 16 BMW engines in 1985 specification.
Berger had the 18/2 and Boutsen the 1 with 3 for the spare car.

SPIRIT

Just when everyone thought they would have to give up through lack of funds, Spirit surprised all and sundry in F1 with its 6 new-version Hart power plants! We all thought that they were after a driver with cash and who've they got? -penniless Mauro Baldi! We thought, they'll concentrate on F3000, but, no, they're back in F1 and are just as ambitious as ever. Last year's 101 had been greatly modified, enough for it to be called the 101D 02. There is new double wishbone front suspension with push rods (rockers as before to the rear). The side pods have been lengthened with the intercooler and water radiator positioned diagonally. The exhausts are under the extractor, the bodywork is waisted at the rear track and so on. It's not what could be called a well-finished car, but it seems to hold out all right. The new Spirit, the 02, will be having its maiden GP at Belgium.

ALFA ROMEO

Alfa didn't manage to finish its 3rd 185T in time for Brazil. A modified version of the 1984 184T was used as the spare car with the spring-damper unit lying flat on the gearbox.

OSELLA

Little Enzo spent a quiet winter as his budget problems weren't solved until recently which meant a last minute race against the clock to get the equipment for 1985 ready. The result is the FA1G/85-03, an FA1F with a new front track. The spare car is rather pompously called the FA1G/85-01 but is in fact an FA1F from last spring and not really competitive. Osella's hopes remain high: "*We're working on a new car which I hope will be ready for Imola. I also hope that we will have received the latest Alfa V8s.*"

LIGIER

The Ligier team's presence at Rio was the result of a great deal of last minute work. The team worked night and day to get three JS25s to Rio. They accepted the challenge of putting up a good fight without having taken part in the preliminary Rio testing session and with only two days of private testing.
De Cesaris had the JS25/01 and Laffite the 02 with the 03 as the spare car.

FERRARI

Like Lotus and Brabham, Ferrari came to Brazil brimming with confidence. The off-season had been spent working particularly hard at producing a competitive package which meant rethinking the fundamental concept of the mechanicals.
Alboreto had the 156/079 and Arnoux the 080 with the 078 as the spare car.

MINARDI

Giancarlo Minardi gave us all a bit of a surprise when he came to the Imola testing session with an M185/001 (was he planning to build over a hundred chassis?) powered by a Cosworth unit! But, that's how he came to Brazil. "*I admit it's going to be very difficult qualifying for a place on the starting grid*", admitted the boss, "*but the reason for our coming over is firstly to get the team used to the working conditions of a GP and secondly to respect our contracts. The turbo Chiti engine will be ready for Imola.*" Minardi shouldn't have worried. Despite the 10% ruling and his driver's — Pierluigi Martini — mediocre qualifying time, his car came under the starter's orders. There were in fact only 25 cars at Rio as a result of Toleman forfeiting and Zakspeed's first race will be at Estoril.

Vive la France! Six frogs at the start, five at the finsh and four in the points — croaak!

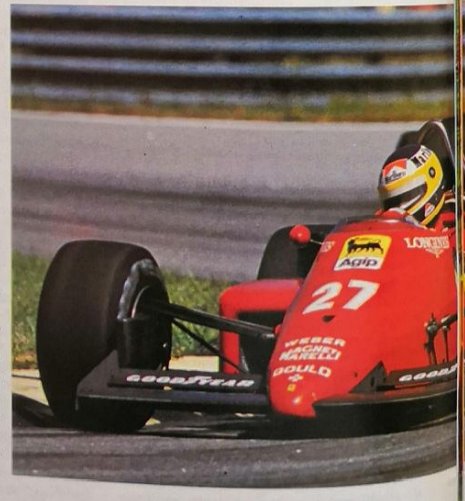
DAY ONE. BLACK, BLACK, THE FRONT ROW'S BLACK!

"*You mark my words,*" Ducarouge cheerfully remarked, "*the font row of the provisional grid is going to be black. All black...*" Alboreto and Piquet were out on the track scrapping for the first pole position of the new season. The Ferrari managed to scrape through the magical 90s barrier. Back at the Lotus pits all was calm and serene. De Angelis and Duc' were chatting. Senna was standing by himself next to his car, glancing furtively over in their direction. The young Brazilian had "moved up" the provisional lap chart. During the morning's untimed practice session, he'd put in the second fastest time behind Alboreto. By sheer willpower he'd got the better of de Angelis by two tenths of a second. And there was no way he was going to let go during the afternoon's timed run. The *cariocas* are all there behind him. Willing him on. Huge JPS hoardings line the circuit with "Go Ayrton!" and have got him sufficiently motivated. The fans have already forgotten Piquet, the idol they once cherished so dearly. But, why are the two Lotuses' front tracks covered with a plastic sheet? Must be something to do with Ducarouge's famous secret (!). Right on! Except that there are four secrets. A mini wing has been mounted on the end of each side pod in font of the rear wheels and a vertical fin is positioned in the air flux between the front wheels and the shell. There's nothing illegal about Duc's system. The scrutineers have given their OK. Does it serve the purpose it's been designed for? Highly probable. And, what's it meant to do? The little flaps increase downforce slightly and by redirecting the air flow thrown up by the huge wheels, there is less drag. To the front, it's not quite so easy to figure out. The air flux is channelled at the side pod inlet (improved radiator and intercooler cooling), with more downforce and air turbulence caused by the rear weels is greatly reduced. The drivers of the black and gold cars didn't give the photographers much time to get close-ups. Apparently, the apendages had proved they were efficient because the cars were about to take part in the timed session thus decked. Which explains why the French engineer was grinning so much...
With a wave of his hand, Ducarouge signalled the drivers it was up to them now. De Angelis was the first to drive down pit lane and out on to the scorching track. Senna would go out once de Angelis had repitted. 1m 28.776s for the Italian and 1m 29.177s for the Brazilian. They'd done it. The front row was all black! "*Musn't think it's over,*" Gérard thought out loud. "*They've still got another set of tyres.*" Senna looked more than anxious to slip them on and go and try for another time. "*No, wait until Elio gets back*". Senna then flew off with the bit between his teeth to stop the clocks at a very fast 1m 28.705s. "*I was held up,*" Ayrton wasted no time in explaining. "*I was forced into passing on the outside at one of the turns. It may have been a Ligier, I'm not sure. I'll do better tomorrow.*" De Angelis had no trouble in saying why he hadn't managed to equal or better his team mate's lap time. "*The engine was misfiring in certain turns. And the gearbox is too hard. I'm sure that I can do better tomorrow. Anyway, no-one's perfect! I'm absolutely shattered, all I want is a shower and some sleep.*" Senna's fantastic lap times had got a number of people jealous in the paddock — even within his own team. Ducarouge was another happy man. His prediction had come true. Now the hard part of proving they could win a GP remained; with or without their "secrets". And that problem was directly dependent on the Renault engine, not just his chassis. With mixed feelings Ducarouge explained, "*If things carry on like this, all those naysayers will be saying that I can only build qualifying cars!*" It must be admitted that they're not entirely wrong. Even Ducarouge himself had said earlier that his cars would be on the front row thanks to the Renault engineers who had produced an engine capable of doing just that — recording a series of very competitive lap times.
The all-yellow cars had not been so lucky. Neither had the all-blues, Ligier. Warwick was conceding a good 6s to Senna during Friday's unofficial test runs and Tambay 3s. The Brit's brakes were playing up, fading just at the most crucial points. Tambay, on the other hand, was plagued by a badly-handling chassis. "*The times that I set on race rubber correspond to what we'd originally planned. But once I get on to qualies the understeering gets really bad. The engine doesn't seem to be developing enough power either. As I accelerate I concede a good 12 kph to the Ferraris and Lotuses.*" Just 90 minutes later, the Frenchman had hoisted himself up into 5th position on the provisional grid. Just one thousandth of a second shy of

Prost's time! Patrick told us why. "*Between the two sessions we looked at the springs and the chassis bottom. The guys managed to locate just what was slowing the engine. Of course, I'm really pleased with my time. We've improved by 1.1s since the preliminary tests.*"
Ligier, unfortunately, had no reference times to fall back on. The JS25 had never turned a wheel at Rio before the Grand Prix. Both drivers, de Cesaris and Laffite, agreed to take the first qualifying session as a second chance to test the cars. "*The other teams have already been here twice,*" commented Michel Tétu. "*It's the first time this year for us. They already know what settings to use whereas we have to sort out all those things now, here, during the first day of practice. That's why we're not going out on soft rubber. It would be a waste.*" De Cesaris finally wet out on qualifying tyres at the end on the session and put in the 15th fastest time.
Williams and his men were looking a very disappointed lot. All that horsepower hadn't been exploited. But, hopefully, it would only be a matter of time. Rosberg was the first to come back with a blown turbo.
The red and white McLarens were following in the wake of the leaders. It was the first time this year for them, too. They were also without qualifying engines. "*It's normal,*" Lauda philosophised. "*This is, after all, only the first day of a long and hard championship.*" "*Everything's going well for me, too,*" chipped in Prost. "*This morning an electrical cable socket came loose but apart from that and considering it's the first time we've tested the new cars, there's nothing to worry about. Compared with last year's times on this circuit, progress has been made. No doubt about it. The one thing I regret, though, is an extra 100bhp to get nearer that pole. But, it's not that important, really, is it?*"
So, now we've dealt with all the incidents (including Ferrari not being able to solve their aerodynamic setting problems or make full use of their engines' output), what important changes were there on the provisional starting grid compared to 1984's? None. Lotus and Ferrari had more or less repeated last year's positions. McLaren's times were a second slower and so were Renault's, 1.2s to be exact.

DAY TWO, CAUTION DID YOU SAY?

Lotus lost its black front line on the grid during the last qualifying session. And took a severe thrashing into the bargain. De Angelis and Senna were demoted from their privileged positions by Alboreto and Rosberg who shot through the 1m 28s mark. Enough to feel demoralised. To be honest, we witnessed yet another horror film and something has got to be done about censoring them. The principle behind these qualifying runs not only provides an untrue picture of reality, but it's also extremely dangerous — soft rubber for maximum grip, minimum downforce for maximum top speed with specially worked engines. There's not much to boast about, unless you add the extra risk to an already very long list of risks. Granted, there aren't that many "super" cars out on the track at the same time, but those that are out on the track have the additional hazard of a slow moving car suddenly appearing on their trajectories warming up its tyres or on its way back to the pits after a quick lap.
Those drivers out to put in their fastest times are not prepared to budge from their ideal lines, not forgeting that some cars are simply slower which means that it is becoming increasingly dangerous to slot in and out and round these moving chicanes. Who are we trying to defend ? Lotus ? No, not them or anyone else in particular. Like all the other teams, they too, knew they would only manage one ultra quick lap. The trick is to know exactly when to go out for it. Perhaps they shouldn't have gone out as early as they did because the track was steadily improving minute by minute.
Senna was the first to improve on his time of 1m 28.75s. He slipped in a cool 1m 28.389s on his first set of qualies. As for the second, he explained, "*I felt better than yesterday, but there was no room. I came upon a Renault twice warming up its tyres bang on the right line into the turn! It's almost impossible now to get in an entirely traffic-free lap. On a circuit like this, pole position isn't all that important. There are many overtaking places, fortunately. All I hope for now is that my car will hold out for the race.*"



Rosberg (Williams Honda No 6) blasted off the line from pole position to lead for 9 laps.

Prost (McLaren TAG No 2) stayed behind Alboreto (Ferrari No 27) until the Italian missed a gear change when he dived past to take command.

SENNA FLEW OFF WITH THE BIT BETWEEN HIS TEETH TO STOP THE CLOCKS AT A VERY FAST 1m 28.705s

De Angelis wasn't luckier than his team mate : "*I was on my first set when I came across Ghinzani. I went straight back to the pits without even bothering to finish my lap. On my second set, it was Johansson in the Tyrrell Cosworth. A very dangerous example. There's not much else to add, is there? That I was unlucky?*"
Many drivers voiced their opinions on this problem. Two changed the subject — Alboreto and Rosberg. The Williams and the Ferrari had left many mouths gaping. The Italian car had impressed the spectators by the quality of its engine and road handling, whereas with the Williams it was a more a case of the incredible impression of power as Rosberg hit the throttle pedal. Even the

Gentlemen, to the scales!

Spot weighing-in checks of the cars during practice and qualifying is a familiar procedure on any GP circuit. This year at Rio, we were able to tell just how inactive some of the drivers have been over the winter...
The weight given is for the driver wearing full equipment, ie, overalls, helmet, gloves, etc.
Lauda 64.45 kilos, Prost 63.25 kilos, Brundle 71.70 kilos, Bellof 73.05 kilos, Mansell 79.95 kilos, Rosberg 68.30 kilos, Piquet 69.75 kg, Hesnault 72.65 kilos, Winkelhock 76.25 kilos, Alliot 72.45 kilos, de Angelis 79.50 kilos, Senna 69.25 kilos, Tambay 78.10 kilos, Warwick 78.15 kilos, Berger 70.55 kilos, Boutsen 74.70 kilos, Johansson 64.40 kilos, Baldi 69.45 kilos, Patrese 74.35 kilos, Cheever 77.70 kilos, Ghinzani 80.00 kilos, de Cesaris 73.95 kilos, Laffite 62.10 kilos, Alboreto 74.00 kilos, Arnoux 66.55 kilos, Martini 64.45 kilos.
Whilst on the subject, Alan Jones appeared to be feeling rather self-conscious about his figure at the Lola/Beatrice team presentation to the press in Paris at the beginning of the year. He had this to say : "*I deny ever having weighed 115 kilos! It's true that I've still got about 8 kilos to shed before I'm back to my old F1 racing weight.*" He's been at his diet for ten weeks now and that coupled with his fitness programme means he should have got rid of the flab by now.

clutch had a hard job putting up with the treatment. During the morning it had in fact given out on the spare car and by the afternoon, Rosberg was lucky to have a clutch at all. In the interim a turbo had blown and a fire had broken out on the race chassis. With the Ferrari, it was nothing like that. No hard brutal driving. It was amongst the fastest cars in straight line speed and took the fast curves beautifully. If Ferrari have succeeded in producing a reliable package, there's no reason why it shouldn't fight for the world crown.

René Arnoux wasn't on such a lucky streak as his team mate. He spun off in the morning, and then again in the afternoon at the wheel of the spare car. His reason — still not 100 % happy with the carbon brakes and the Frenchman has never had a particular soft spot for the circuit either.

LAUDA — THIS IS, AFTER ALL, ONLY THE FIRST DAY OF A LONG AND HARD CHAMPIONSHIP

The Renault boys, too, had brake problems on the menu, just like on the previous day's. Warwick spent the morning testing the new EF15 engine which he kept for the race. He put in some quick laps with the spare car during the last qualifying session but still had some spine tingling moments. Tambay's stint ended with him plunging through three rows of catch fencing when the front brakes suddenly evaporated and his rear wheels locked up... There was no chance of carrying out repair work to the chassis on the circuit and he had to resort to using the spare car for the race.

He dropped down from 5th place on the grid to 11th. It must be said that the new V6 EF15 was looking extremely good and Renault have every reason to feel proud of their new creation. Warwick completed 20 laps. The real test would be the race — 61 laps.

Who, then, had squeezed their way in between Alboreto and Tambay ? Warwick, the two McLaren drivers, Arnoux, Mansell and Piquet. A great day's work for Brabham whose Pirelli qualifying rubber isn't quite as good the Goodyear equivalent. Prost was sitting on the 3rd row and Lauda on the 5th. No, they hadn't had any problems apart from the gearbox slightly grating between 3rd/4th/5th on the little Frenchman's car. One wonders if TAG Porsche will soon develop a qualifying engine. Prost and Lauda both turned up their boost pressure knobs when they had their first sets of soft rubber fitted, but it appeared to be more of a hazard than a help.

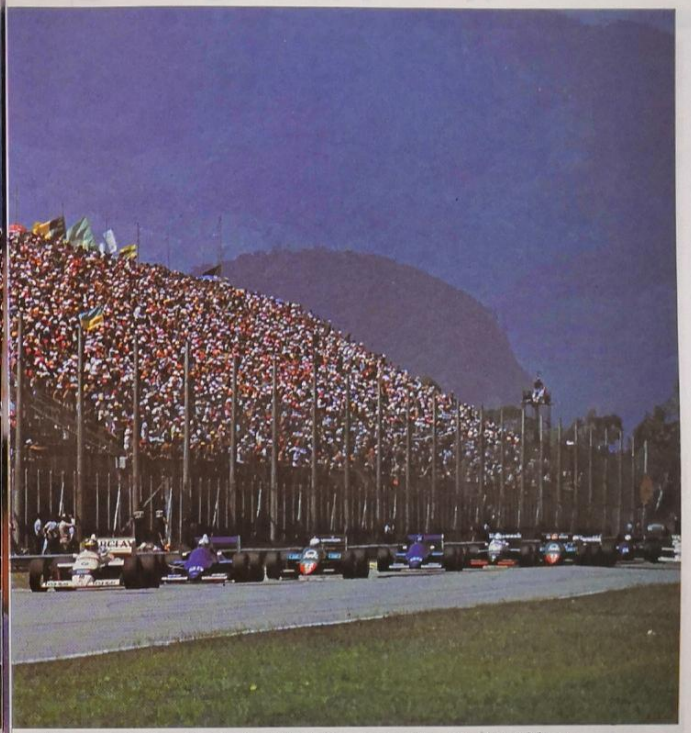
Boutsen and his Arrows came after Tambay in 12th position. The Belgian

Leader of the mid-field runners Lauda (McLaren TAG No 1) quickly closed in just as he was about to pounce.

TYRRELL/BELLOF — THE END?

Stefan Bellof has been entered to take part in the 1985 F1 World Championship with the British team Tyrrell. Stefan arrived in Rio in great spirits. OK, so he would be racing the normally-aspirated Cosworth engine for the first few rounds, but he'd be getting a Renault turbo unit in mid-May. It just meant waiting a while, that's all. He drove to the Jacarepagua circuit in his hired Volkswagen and got there a little late as he'd been held up by the traffic. He made his way straight to the drivers' weighing-in area. He was already wearing his overalls with helmet in hand. 73.05 kilos. But, what's Johansson doing there?. Strange for a driver without a car... Then he went to the Tyrrell pits. Just as he was about to climb into the cockpit of his car he turned towards Ken, his boss, and said something. Stefan then took off his helmet and gloves and seemed to be embroiled in a heated discussion. Suddenly, he was standing next to his car and then walking away. Volkswagen, hotel, airport. Ken Tyrrell explained that it was all to do with a letter that the German driver had sent him a week before the race and having his licence withdrawn for the one round at Brazil. Others heard Tyrrell saying that he would be getting his driver back at Imola... What exactly had Belloff and his manager Willi Maurer written in that letter? They wanted certain clauses of the 1985 contract to be confirmed concerning what advertising badges would be sewn onto the drivers' overalls and where and secondly the guarantee that the cars would be conform with F1 rules and regulations. Tyrrell had refused to reply. Luckily for tall Ken, Johansson was on hand looking miserable as he ambled aimlessly about the pits. Had someone tipped him off about a possible Tyrrell/Bellof clash? Had he been asked to drop by, 'just in case'? *"I didn't have anything to do at home in Europe,"* the Swede explained looking anything but guilty. *"I and a few of the men from Toleman thought we'd come over to the Brazilian GP to watch. Why did I bring my overalls? Well, I wanted to have some fun and games and I was going to take part in the Fiat Trophy."* It was fairly obvious that he was telling the truth because he even had to borrow Rosberg's spare helmet for the first untimed pratice run on Friday. His own helmet arrived from England by plane a little later on. The brilliant young Swedish driver doesn't know what's going to happen next. Toleman still haven't a tyre supplier, neither have they officially informed FISA that they will be forfeiting their entry.

The unexpected Tyrrell/Bellof flare up almost certainly did not occur just because of the letter. Perhaps Renault's deal to supply Ken with its turbo engines might also mean sending along a young French driver backed by the constructor itself and, more importantly, by its partner Elf, in a bid to pick up the pieces and recreate the Tyrrell/Elf connection for up and coming drivers. Perhaps Tyrrell accepted only to have Elf announce that the French driver wouldn't be available until 1986. The name Philippe Streiff automatically springs to mind. And rightly, too. He was even supposed to go over to Rio but he had problems with one of his sponsors, Gitanes to be exact. *"We have signed a contract with Streiff and AGS for the F3000 series,"* Michel Gastaldi the Gitanes PR man explained. *"Our concern is for Philippe to take part in the championship in the best possible conditions. We are not against the idea of him taking part in a few Grands Prix at the wheel of a third Renault."* There is a way round the problem. FISA would have to allow a driver to take part in two events during the same weekend. Or, Elf could consider Alain Ferté. The fact remains that there's never smoke without fire especially since Gitanes sparked off the row between Tyrrell and Bellof.



on team mate Prost only to fall victim to an electrical problem

was convinced there was a gremlin somewhere in his engine. His qualifying times were similar to those he'd obtained during the preliminary tests but in race configuration he was a second shy. *"There's not enough traction out of the corners and I'm bouncing up and down on the smallest of bumps. It's not what I'd call a nice car to drive."*

THE FERRARI TOOK THE FAST CURVES BEAUTIFULLY

Just 0.5 s behind came de Cesaris with Laffite almost with him. This time they'd both been out on soft rubber. Andrea went out in the spare car as the distribution belt had gone on his car during the morning. Compared with last year's qualifying position at Rio, de Cesaris had improved his time by 1.5s. Good work, but could do better is the verdict. Michel Tétu admitted that *"the chassis still isn't perfectly balanced. We're slowly getting there, step by step."*

All was not plain sailing in the Alfa camp either. They were still having to contend with the greedy nature of their engine. Compared with the Spirit and the Minardi they looked really great! In the first session they put in 1m 41.330s and 1m 44.046s, but did not go out again for a time during the second run. On Friday evening the mechanics located a slit on the intercooler but were unable to repair it as they didn't have the necessary parts. They had to find a specialised centre, which was naturally closed for Easter. Repairs were finally carried out and the engine was ready late Saturday morning. But Baldi couldn't get his car to fire up! Brian Hart resorted to every trick he knew. Martini had similar problems. His Cosworth engine exploded when he over-revved. The mechanics got down to work as fast as they could, hoping to be ready for the last qualifying session. They just made it, only to realise that the metering unit on the fresh V8 wasn't working.

The first qualifying round to the 1985 F1 World Championship turned out to be more of a testing session for the greater part of the teams. A few prayers were offered here and there to the god of fuel consumption problems but the main thing on everyone's minds were the tyres. It was hot at Rio. Very hot — 33°C the shade and 55°C on the track. Many were those who spent a sleepless night worrying just how the tyres were going to stand up to 61 laps out there in the blistering beat. Those on Goodyear rubber opted to fit relatively soft tyres and make a pit stop for fresh tyres, whereas the Pirelli contingent couldn't decide what the ultimate choice should be. Laffite (hard tyres) and Piquet (soft race tyres) carried out a comparative test, which resulted in the Brabham pulling out almost 3s a lap. The choice was made easier... ■

At 9 o'clock the spectators were already in place waiting excitedly for the warm-up to commence. An extra thirty minutes for last-minute testing prior to the start of the Grand Prix during which the tyres and various settings are seen to for the last time. Race day had dawned bright and clear and hot. A good 85,000 admission tickets had been sold. The grandstands were spilling over with brown arms and happy and eager-looking faces.

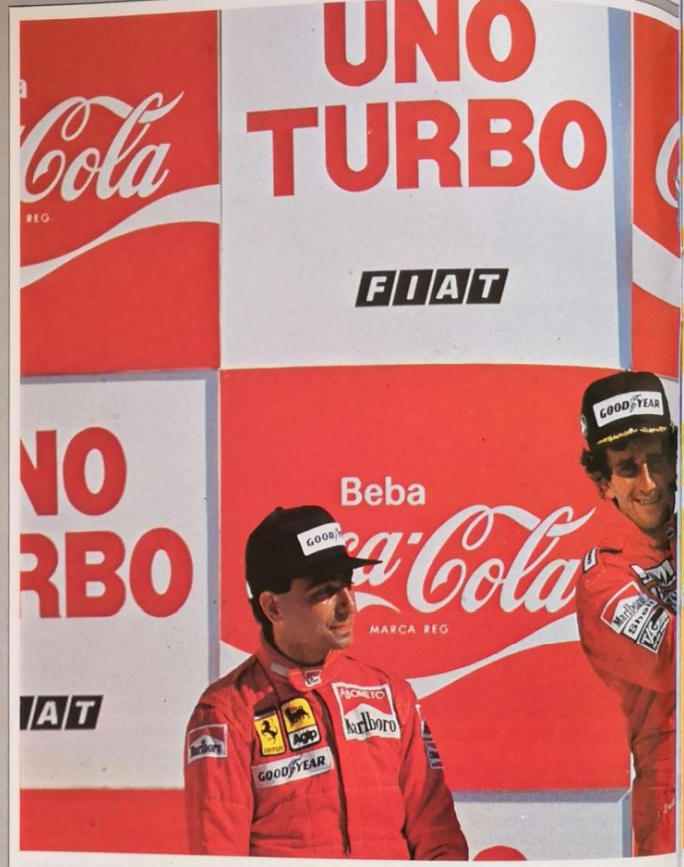
Renault weren't having a very good week-end. Both cars were 4s slower than the pace setters Alboreto and Prost. The brake problems seem to have been dialed out. Now, it was audibly a case of the new EF15 engine causing trouble. Derek Warwick's car let out irregular bangs here and there as it lapped its way round the circuit. Others on Renault power like de Cesaris and de Angelis had to make last minute engine swops. Boutsen also had his BMW engine replaced by a new block (Rosche not Mader prepared) whilst a small fire broke out on Berger's single seater. And he, too, had to opt for the spare car. In the McLaren camp all was well. Prost chose to have small turbos fitted to his car. Making the correct tyre choice was a much trickier subject to be tackled. The Pirelli boys finally decided on 3s, a soft race rubber compound, which meant that they wouldn't be pitting for fresh tyres. A risk. Those with a Goodyear contract in their possession differed in their opinions. The McLarens went for shodding their cars with hard A tyres to all four wheels. Ferrari also had As mounted but with an AA (extra hard rubber) to the rear right wheel only. It was very much of a muchness. Pit stops would be made depending on the wear and tear and how badly grip was impaired.

10 LAPS

Alboreto 16m 37.782s; Prost; Senna; De Angelis; Lauda; Rosberg; Arnoux; De Cesaris; Patrese; Tambay; Laffite; Cheever; Boutsen; Warwick; Brundle; Berger; Winkelhock; Johansson; Alliot; Ghinzani; Martini; Hesnault (1 lap).

1:00. The sun was blazing down with all its might. 37° C in the shade and 57° out on the track itself. Local hero Senna deemed it a wise precaution to warm up his tyres as they went out for the formation lap.

At 1:04 the green light was on. Alboreto and Rosberg got off to a slow start but the Brazilian on the 4th slot of the grid was quick to make a dash towards the gap. He didn't make it. Rosberg beat him to it and emerged as the pack leader as he accelerated out of the first turn with Alboreto, Prost, Senna and de Angelis in hot pursuit. A cloud of red smoke billowed up behind. Mansell had already gone off getting those close to him into a state of panic. He'd gone into the turn hugging tightly on to the outside line. A slight shove from Alboreto who was in the process of getting past Prost, Senna and de Angelis on the inside sent the Williams skidding out onto the grass. The lower fairing was damaged. But Mansell kept his wits about him and managed to keep the engine



Prost, Alboreto and de Angelis —the winning trio at Brazil.

Alliot and his RAM finished a promising 8th.

Laffite/Ligier — back in business.

running to rejoin the race. He was to retire on lap 8 with a broken exhaust and rear light.

Rosberg was still heading the pursuit at the end of the opening lap, 2.55s ahead of Alboreto, with 3.55s on Prost, 4.40s on the two Lotus drivers with Arnoux, Piquet, Patrese, de Caesaris, Tambay and Laffite in full stride behind. The Williams was most impressive as it powered its way out of the corners and down the straight portions with incredible accelerating punch, thrusting ahead. As it came to the turns, the Ferrari closed in so that by the end of lap 4 the red car was still firmly latched on to the Williams's tail. The Italian tried to capture the lead at the hairpin before the pits, but his attempt was thwarted. He tried again several times on lap 5 but with no more success. He lay in wait for something to happen. Some F1 cars are reputedly reliable. Not the Williams, though. It was just a matter of time. Meanwhile, Prost had narrowed the small gap that had built up between himself and the scrapping leading pair. He tagged on behind, refusing to be drawn into the fight. He had nothing to worry about. The small Frenchman knew that his most dangerous rivals, the two Lotuses, were quite a way behind, about 5s, and he knew that Lauda was safely following Arnoux some 7.5s behind.

Lauda got past Arnoux at the end of the long straight in front of the grandstand and began hauling in the front runners slowly but surely. He had all the time in the world, there was nothing to get nervous about. By lap 8, however, a number of leading cars had already dropped out. Mansell, of course, but Piquet had also spun out on an oil patch which the others were still trying to locate. The second Brabham wasn't much luckier and a couple of laps later its nose cone was torn off in a tangle with Cheever as well as the brake master cylinders. Exit Hesnault. Just as the ferocious pack was about to stream down pit straight for the 11th time, a huge bluish cloud of smoke came out of the leading Williams's rear end. The left turbo had blown. And the fire extinguisher. Alboreto took over command with Prost still close on his heels. Both men quickened the pace leaving the Lotuses to their fate. Lauda snatched third place as he drove past them. The Austrian had displaced Arnoux on lap 8 and then went for de Angelis on lap 11 followed by Senna on lap 14. His McLaren was over 8s behind his team mate's at that point but he was closing in steadily. By lap 16 the gap had narrowed to 6s and then to 4.5s on lap 17.

20 LAPS

Prost 33m 12.457s; Alboreto; Lauda; Senna; De Angelis; Arnoux; De Cesaris; Laffite; Tambay; Boutsen 1m 36.839s; Patrese (1 lap); Cheever (1 lap); Berger (1 lap); Alliot (1 lap); Winkelhock (1 lap); Johansson (1 lap); Ghinzani (1 lap); Brundle (1 lap); Martini (1 lap); Warwick (2 laps).

Alain realised that if he wanted to stay ahead of Niki, he had no other choice but to get past Alboreto and charge off ahead. The two red and white cars had come close to each other on lap 17. Then, the Frenchman seized his chance just before the end of lap 18 as Alboreto missed

a gear change going into the tight right-hander before the pits. Prost pounced and got through to sail ahead into the lead which he was to keep until the chequered flag. He inexorably built up a comfortable cushion on his immediate follower which increased from 4.94s on lap 20 to 6.94s on lap 24 to 17.56s on lap 27. It all seemed too easy somehow. Lauda was gradually closing in on the Italian and just as everyone thought he was going to engulf the Italian in his net, the McLaren unexpectedly slowed down. The electronic ignition injection system had suddenly ceased to function. Niki limped back to the pits to get it changed. He went out again for three laps, but on lap 28 he was forced to admit defeat. A great weight had been lifted off Alboreto's shoulders. Prost was undoubtedly feeling even more relieved!

30 LAPS

Prost 50m 13.005s; Senna; Alboreto; De Angelis; Alliot (1 lap); Tambay (1 lap); Boutsen (1 lap); Laffite (1 lap); Berger (1 lap); Johansson (1 lap); Winkelhock (1 lap); Brundle (1 lap); Ghinzani (1 lap); Arnoux (1 lap); Cheever (2 laps); Warwick (3 laps); De Cesaris (4 laps); Lauda (6 laps).

The McLarens had kept very much to themselves during the off-season. Even during practice they'd stayed out of the limelight and behind Ferrari, Williams and Lotus throughout the two-day period. McLaren couldn't have got off to a more convincing start, taking up exactly from where they had left off last season at Estoril. Everyone thought that the competition was going to be fiercer in the light of all the announcements that had been made concerning the various teams' progress sheets. Admitedly McLaren still haven't got what it takes to establish pole position on a circuit like Jacarepagua but they proved in every other way that they are head and shoulders above the rest. The McLaren is everything a winning car should be. Reliable, quick and even Michelin's withdrawal didn't seem to have hampered performances. Will they remain as competitive throughout this new season? The guessing has only just started but Patrick Tambay had this to say. *"If Alain doesn't make any silly slips then I'm sure he'll win all the 1985 GPs."*

Both cars behaved superbly. The Austrian reigning World Champion's car only came to a halt because of a cut in the electronic circuit. Nothing else. It was just a case of bad luck.

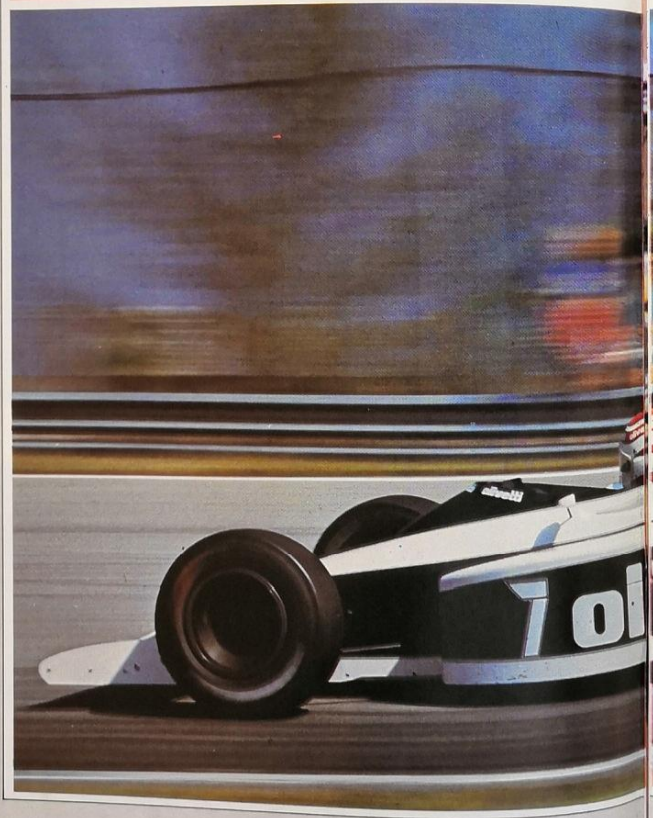
True enough it was Rosberg who surged ahead on the opening round to lead the field for 9 laps. But, could he have kept up the pressure for 61 laps? *"Everything was going really well,"* the Finn explained. *"The car had a tendency to understeer but it wasn't anything I couldn't handle and it didn't worry me too much. Alboreto and Prost weren't far behind and I was thinking about driving carefully to spare the tyres. I'm sure I could have stayed ahead with no problem."* Prost and Alboreto wasted no time in taking over command. Sooner or later the Finn would have been confronted with a show down, but a blown turbo put a stop to that. Once the powerful Honda engine is reliable enough to finish a race Keke and Nigel Mansell should have no trouble winning Grands Prix.

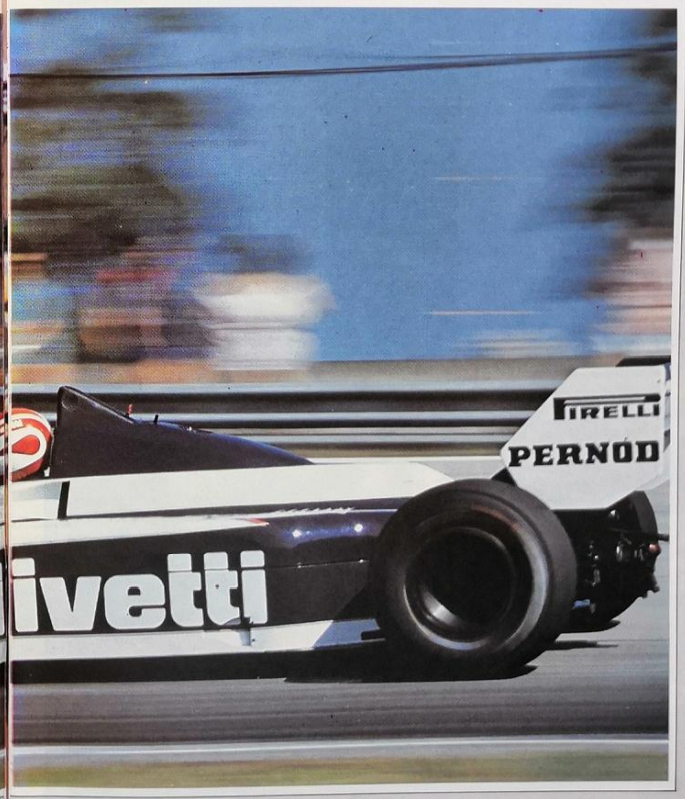
Ferrari ran away with the lead for 8 laps between laps 10 and 18. Prost seized his chance to get past Alboreto when the Italian missed a gear change. The Frenchman didn't exert himself much, and he wasn't on full boost pressure either. Anyway Prost captured the lead and kept it. Arnoux could legitimately have hoped for a place on the rostrum steps had he not

And Ayrton did just that putting in the 4th fastest qualifying time.

Patrick Tambay (Renault RE60) was very disappointed to have only scored 2 points.

A catastrophic weekend for the freshly-liveried Brabham BT54s.





tangled with de Ceasaris. *"I lost a possible third place finish. I was lying 4th behind Senna and I was closing in all the time. And he was forced to retire!"* There's no doubt that once Ferrari get on to a circuit more adapted to their cars' characteristics they'll be in a position to put up a serious fight against the McLarens. They are perhaps the only real contenders. Had any other cars looked as though they could match Prost's for its speed, efficiency and handling? Lotus perhaps? Senna: *"The car was fantastic. I was running on minimum turbo boost. My main concern was to keep the gap between myself and Alboreto intact."* The young Brazilian driver didn't mention the word McLaren. Prost's McLaren as it powered away into the distance. Or Lauda's which had shot past him. Ayrton was a disappointed man when his Renault came to an abrupt halt. *"I think I would have had enough fuel to finish the race,"* he said. *"And physically I could easily have lasted the distance to take four points."* His team mate de Angelis put on a superb show for all those at Rio as he swept along in 5th position from the start to lap 24 and then in 4th when Lauda pulled out. His third place finish was more than he had dared hope for. Senna's retirement had been most unexpected. *"After ten laps, I realised that I was on the wrong tyres. I was left helpless in that respect and my thoughts were filled with calculating how much fuel I needed to get to the end. Anyway, it's only the first race of the year and I'm perfectly thrilled with finishing third."* Elio was over cautious with his fuel. There were still 18 litres left in the tank at the end of the race!

Behind the two pack leaders all was far from calm. Renault's latest weapon the EF15 had started misbehaving badly on lap 15, and Warwick found himself slipping back through the mid-field runners from 13th position to 15th. The Britisher made a lightning pit stop to get the spark plugs changed and his yellow car motored along a little better. Warwick then tangled with Patrese slightly damaging his car but forcing the Italian to retire with the rear track askew. Just before Patrese had clipped Laffite in the Ligier as he tried to get round. A new nose cone was fitted to Jacques's car but he was sent hurtling down the provisional leaderboard from 8th position to 16th. His hopes were still high — at the rate cars were dropping out, he could still well be in with a chance for a point. Team mate de Cesaris had been battling along alone with Arnoux a good 9s ahead of him. He chased hard and by lap 22 the gap had closed to only a couple of yards. The Italian was waiting for an error from Arnoux to get past. On lap 27 his chance came. René was going to pit stop for fresh tyres and moved over to the inside of the right hander preceding the pits. Caught unawares, de Cesaris flung his car over to the outside of the turn which in all logic was the only thing he could have done. But, there wasn't enough room for both cars to get through.

40 LAPS

Prost 1 hour 06m 29.994s; Alboreto 24m 577s; Senna 56m 881; De Angelis 1m 23.699s; Tambay (1 lap); Laffite (1 lap); Arnoux (2 laps); Alliot (2 laps); Boutsen (2 laps); Brundle (2 laps); Winkelhock (2 laps); Johansson (2 laps); Berger (2 laps); Cheever (2 laps); Warwick (3 laps).

They rammed into each other. The Ligier's front right wheel was torn off and it ground to a halt a little further on. The Ferrari suffered a punctured rear left tyre. Arnoux worked his way round the track in typical Villeneuve style — on three wheels and a rim. He completed an entire lap and once a new wheel had been fitted he was

off again, joining the race in 13th position. Meanwhile, up front, Prost had extended his lead to 20.07s on Alboreto and to 26.42s on Senna. As for de Angelis who had inherited 4th position following the demise of Lauda, he began falling back. He was down to 6th place after beginning a series of tyre changes. Then it was Prost's turn to pit on lap 29 but he didn't lose command of the race. Then Alboreto stopped. The crowd was on the verge of hysteria. Their favorite, Senna, was lying 2nd! just 8.41s behind Prost and 17.05s ahead of Alboreto. The Brazilian didn't enjoy the sweet taste of 2nd position long as he, too, had to pit stop for fresh tyres on lap 31 and went out to rejoin the field in 3rd position. Boutsen was the next to stop, and then Tambay who was motoring along in 7th. It was difficult to know just who was where as those drivers that hadn't stopped at the pits were making up lost ground on those that had. For example, Philippe Alliot was lying 5th on lap 28 and he defended his position as best as he could throughout four laps. But there was nothing he could do against those cars coming back into the race on fresh rubber. Behind came Tambay and Laffite. Arnoux had brilliantly carved his way up from 13th position, after his encounter with de Cesaris, to 7th on lap 38. Out front, Prost was still charging ahead extending even more daylight between himself and Alboreto. On lap 38 he had a cushion of 26.63s on lap 33 and 27.37s on lap 43. He had proved he was fast, so what was the point of careering off ahead even further? Tambay was already conceding a lap despite sitting in 5th position. Laffite was two laps behind and Ghinzani in 15th place was three laps behind the leader!

The Lotuses seemed to be in a spot of bother. De Angelis was slowing at the rate of 3-4s a lap and had to surrender 4th place on lap 45. Senna, on the other hand, was forced into retirement when the electrics went. Now that the spectators' idol was no longer in the running, the grandstands began to empty. Only Prost and Alboreto were still on the same lap.

50 LAPS

Prost 1 hour 22m 54.533; Alboreto 24m 123s; De Angelis (1 lap); Senna (2 laps); Tambay (2 laps); Arnoux (2 laps); Laffite (2 laps); Alliot (2 laps); Brundle (2 laps); Johansson (2 laps); Boutsen (2 laps); Berger (3 laps); Winkelhock (3 laps); Ghinzani (3 laps); Warwick (4 laps).

The flying Frenchman had eased up on the throttle to prepare for a perfect landing. 17.71s, 15.80s, then 10.70s. He streamed past the finishing post only a mere 3.25s ahead of Alboreto in the Ferrari. The rest of the GP was not worthy of a GP. A few battles raged briefly here and there. Take the example of the skirmish that broke out between Tambay and Laffite for 5th place and 2 points. But was it worth it? After all Laffite was conceding two laps to the leaders. For Laffite, most definitely.

For Renault it had been a particularly trying weekend, both for the Régie cars as well as for Ligier. For Tambay and Warwick it was the brakes, but they still managed to go the whole way as they found an easy solution to their problem: last year's brake master cylinders were flown out from Paris on Saturday evening. The new EF15 engine block, however, gave its driver Derek Warwick an unpleasant time slowing him down during all of 27 laps. Once the spark plugs had been changed the car seemed to have picked up considerably, but it didn't excel. Compared with the Ferrari and TAG Porsche units the EF15 isn't an even match.

Patrick Tambay's two points were a pleasant surprise. Especially since he had run out of fuel at last year's round. *"I don't consider these two points as being really satisfying,"* he told reporters. *"Let's say they're more like a consolation prize, especially for the boys who have worked so hard. I've no sense of fulfilment. It's tough when you have to battle hard the whole distance and find that you're two laps behind the winning car. But there's more to it than that. What has to be modified to get this car as quick and efficient as the McLarens and the Ferraris? The suspension? The engine? The aerodynamics? Everything I reckon. We've got to pull all the stops out now."*

In the Ligier camp, smiles were the order of the day. The blues had gone to Rio for the first time with the JS25 and one of the drivers had only put in 150-odd miles during the off-season. But, they were going home with a whole point! De Cesaris would undoubtedly have also scored if he hadn't been involved in the incident with Arnoux. And Jacques Laffite was also stripped of a possible few then he tangled with Patrese. Not a bad result for a 580-kilo single seater! *"The chassis felt great,"* Laffite admitted after the race. *"And it improved all the time. I was unlucky that I came across those two toughies. I was baulked by Cheever for the whole of eight laps and I was a good two seconds faster than him. I was stuck behind Patrese for five laps and in the end we tangled. That's racing for you. I'm feeling confident about the car now and I'm looking at this season through rose-tinted spectacles."*

Philippe Alliot also drove a strong race. The sweat was pouring off him at the end but he was looking as pleased as punch. He was lying 10th on lap 21 and he found himself rapidly promoted as one car after another dropped out. His driving, however, was not appreciated by Tambay who was forced to take the right hand curve after the straight on the grass. His high spot came during the round of pit stops when he found himself unexpectedly in 4th and then 6th position by the halfway mark. His electronically injected Hart engine began playing up with still another 20 laps to go. The RAM team had every reason to be pleased. *"The car's great, I'm telling you. You'll see, we'll get 'em yet!"*

The happy winner of the day didn't have much to say. He had no excuses to make, as usual. *"I got really worried when Niki retired. After all, an electronic failure can happen at any time. Not only that, the warning light came on once. I was prepared for the worst to happen at any moment. Not a bad result when you consider that our first track test with the car was on Friday morning! My season's got off to a good start. But to be really honest, it's a tough job getting past a Ferrari. I reckon that they accelerate better than we do and top speed is about the same. The real difference lies in the turns and that's where I made full use of everything in my possession. What we need now is a bit more power for qualifying and for a few other special cases. Apart from that, there's nothing that needs seeing to. Thanks!"*

Pierluigi Martini (Minardi) was on his maiden Grand Prix and started from the very last slot on the grid.

Ayrton Senna — Brazil's most popular F1 driver. What happened to Nelson Piquet?

GP NEWS IN BRIEF

Ecclestone decorated. The governor of Rio Leonel Brizola bestowed upon Bernie Ecclestone the title of "Honorary Citizen of the town of Rio de Janeiro", in recognition of his work which has helped both the regional and local tourist industries. The extraordinary general meeting of the Legislatives of the town of Rio took place on April 3.

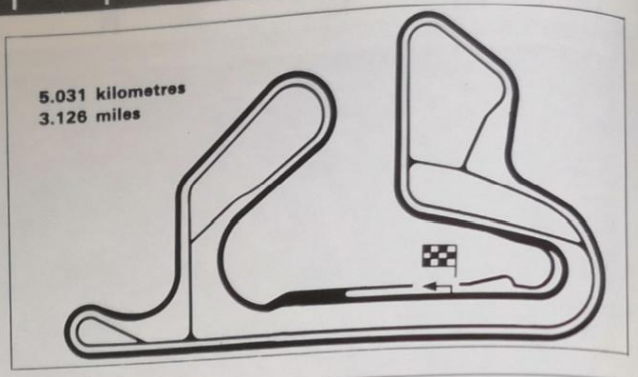
Ligier-Gitanes without Gitanes? At Rio the blue cars were devoid of any stickers bearing the French cigarette label. They were ready and waiting in a suitcase but Loto is not furthering its backing, despite a two-year contract. The entire bodywork is now available for the SEITA who import the tobacco. However, such a vast surface area costs a vast amount of money in F1... Meanwhile, Ligier were sporting their own name and Antar's as well as a few sponsors' who'd been flown over in de Cesaris's plane.

RAMs and Radar. Radar, a chain of super and hypermarkets in France are giving F1 advertising a try on the RAMs. *"It's just a test,"* a spokesman told us. *"If it works, we'll invest more."*

Senna and Mansell reprimanded. During Friday morning's untimed practice session Senna, who was in 8th position, suddenly found himself with the second fastest time just behind Alboreto after putting in two laps with the chequered flag out. Was it being waved to indicate that his time should be cancelled? It was in fact to remind him that unofficial practice times cannot be used to establish starting grid positions. On Saturday, Mansell came to a halt out on the track with electrical problems and with only a few hundred yards to go to the pits he called over to the emergency assistance crew to give him a push. He was quickly spotted, though, and a second reprimand was given. If we remember rightly, Winkelhock did exactly the same thing in 1984 but he was disqualified from taking part in the GP.

BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX

Round 1 of the 1985 F1 World Championship.
Date: April 7, 1985.
Circuit: Jacarepagua
Length: 5.031 km / 3.126 miles.
Race Distance: 61 laps, 306.889 km / 190.686 miles.
Weather: Hot and sunny.
Attendance: 85,000.



PREVIOUS WINNERS

(Last five races).
1984: Prost (McLaren MP4)
1983: Piquet (BMW BT52)
1982: Piquet (Brabham BT49D)*
1981: Reutemann (Williams RW07C)
1980: Arnoux (Renault RE21)
* Disqualified (car not conform) and replaced by Prost (Renault RE30).

STARTING GRID

1. Alboreto Ferrari 156/85 1m 27.768s	2. Rosberg Williams FW 10/01 1m 27.874s
3. De Angelis Lotus JPS 97-T 1m 28.081s	4. Senna Lotus JPS 97-T 1m 28.389s
5. Mansell Williams FW 10/02 1m 28.848s	6. Prost Mc Laren MP4/2B 1m 29.117s
7. Arnoux Ferrari 156/85 1m 29.612s	8. Piquet Brabham BT-54 1m 29.855s
9. Lauda McLaren MP4/2B 1m 29.984s	10. Warwick Renault RE-60 1m 30.100s
11. Tambay Renault RE-60 1m 30.254s	12. Boutsen Arrows A8-1 1m 30.953s
13. De Cesaris Ligier JS-25 1m 31.411s	14. Patrese Alfa 185T/02 1m 31.790s
15. Laffite Ligier JS-25 1m 32.021s	16. Winkelhock RAM 03/02 1m 32.560s
17. Hesnault Brabham BT-54 1m 32.904s	18. Cheever Alfa 185T/01 1m 33.091s
19. Berger Arrows A8-2 1m 34.773s	20. Alliot RAM 03/01 1m 34.773s
21. Brundle Tyrrell 0-12 1m 36.152s	22. Ghinzani Osella RA-16/85 1m 36.743s
23. Johansson Tyrrell 0-12 1m 37.293s	24. Baldi Spirit - 101/2 1m 41.330s
25. Martini Minardi M-185 1m 44.046s	

SUCCESSIVE LEADERS

Laps 1-9: Rosberg.
Laps 10-17: Alboreto.
Laps 18-61 (finish): Prost.

RETIREMENTS

Lap 3: Piquet, spun.
Lap 8: Baldi, turbo.
Lap 9: Mansell, exhausts.
Lap 10: Hesnault, tangled.
Lap 11: Rosberg, turbo.
Lap 21: Patrese, tangled.
Lap 27: De Cesaris, tangled.
Lap 28: Lauda, electrical failure.
Lap 42: Martini, electrical failure.
Lap 43: Cheever, electrical failure.
Lap 49: Senna, electrical failure.
Lap 52: Berger, snapped rear suspension.

PITSTOPS

Lap 16: Brundle, tyres.
Lap 17: Warwick, changed spark plugs.
Lap 21: Laffite, replaced nose cone, tyres.
Lap 24: Lauda, electronic problems.
Lap 25: Lauda, electronic problems.
Lap 26: De Angelis, tyres.
Lap 26: Boutsen, tyres.
Lap 28: Tambay, tyres.
Lap 28: Arnoux, tyres.
Lap 28: Martini, tyres.
Lap 30: Prost, tyres.
Lap 30: Alboreto, tyres.
Lap 31: Senna, tyres.
Lap 34: Johansson, tyres.
Lap 38: Ghinzani, tyres.

FINAL RESULTS

1. Alain Prost (Marlboro McLaren) 61 laps or 306.889 km/191.895 miles in 1 hour 41m 26.115s. 2. Michele Alboreto (Ferrari) 1 hour 41m 29.374s. 3. Elio de Angelis (Lotus Renault) 60 laps. 4. René Arnoux (Ferrari) 59 laps. 5. Patrick Tambay (Renault Elf) 59 laps. 6. Jacques Laffite (Ligier Gitanes) 59 laps. 7. Stefan Johansson (Tyrrell Ford) 58 laps. 8. Philippe Alliot (Ram Hart) 58 laps. 9. Martin Brundle (Tyrrell Ford) 57 laps. 10. Derek Warwick (Renault Elf) 57 laps. 11. Thierry Boutsen (Arrows BMW) 57 laps. 12. Piercarlo Ghinzani (Osella) 57 laps. 13. Manfred Winkelhock (Ram Hart) 57 laps. The remaining drivers were not classified.

Lap record: Prost (McLaren-TAG MP4-2B) 1m 36.702s at an average speed of 187.292 kph/117.057 mph.
Track record: Prost (McLaren-TAG MP4-2) 1m 36.499s at an average speed of 187.686 kph/117.303 mph in 1984.

THEIR FASTEST LAPS

Prost	1m 36.702s	Hesnault	1m 41.151s
Alboreto	1m 36.925s	Boutsen	1m 41.809s
Lauda	1m 38.098s	Patrese	1m 41.812s
Arnoux	1m 38.349s	Cheever	1m 41.855s
Senna	1m 38.440s	Johansson	1m 41.926s
Rosberg	1m 38.678s	Ghinzani	1m 42.234s
De Angelis	1m 39.080s	Berger	1m 42.588s
Warwick	1m 39.715s	Brundle	1m 42.606s
Mansell	1m 39.996s	Alliot	1m 43.115s
De Cesaris	1m 40.008s	Winkelhock	1m 44.236s
Tambay	1m 40.459s	Martini	1m 45.662s
Piquet	1m 40.558s	Baldi	1m 47.046s
Laffite	1m 40.572s		

DRIVERS' WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

(After the Brazilian Grand Prix)

1. Prost	9 points
2. Alboreto	6 points
3. De Angelis	4 points
4. Arnoux	3 points
5. Tambay	2 points
6. Laffite	1 point

CONSTRUCTORS' WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

(After the Brazilian Grand Prix)

1. McLaren and Ferrari	9 points
3. Lotus	4 points
4. Renault	2 points
5. Ligier	1 point

FOR THE RECORD

All teams with the exception of Osella and Tyrrell had new cars for the 1st round of the 1985 F1 World Championship ● 1st Grand Prix for the Minardi team ● 1st Grand Prix for Senna with Lotus, Winkelhock with Ram, Hesnault with Brabham, Mansell with Williams and Berger with Arrows ● Laffite back with Ligier ● First outing of the new Renault EF15 engine ● The Toleman team had to forfeit its entry at the Brazilian Grand Prix as it still hadn't found a tyre supplier ● Tyrrell driver Bellof was replaced by Johansson.

DRIVERS	TEAMS	CONSTRUCTORS	QUALIFYING	
1 Lauda	McLaren International	Mc Laren MP4-TAG/MP4-2B/01 (T: MP4-2B/03)	1m 30.716s	**1m 29.989s**
2 Prost	McLaren International	McLaren-TAG/MP4-2B/02	1m 30.253s	**1m 29.117s**
3 Brundle	Tyrrell Ltd	Tyrrell Ford 012/06 (T: 012/5)	1m 36.225s	**1m 36.152s**
4 Johansson	Tyrrell Ltd	Tyrrell Ford 012/7	1m 37.799s	**1m 37.293s**
5 Mansell	Williams Racing Team	Williams Honda FW10/02 (T: FW09/8)	1m 31.211s	**1m 28.848s**
6 Rosberg	Williams Racing Team	Honda FW 10/01	1m 32.135s	**1m 27.864s**
7 Piquet	Brabham	Brabham-BMW BT53/3 (T: BT54/2)	1m 31.364s	**1m 29.855s**
8 Hesnault	Brabham	Brabham-BMW BT54/1	1m 34.742s	**1m 32.904s**
9 Winkelhock	RAM Grand Prix Racing Ltd	RAM-Hart 03/02	1m 36.239s	**1m 32.560s**
10 Alliot	RAM Grand Prix Racing Ltd	RAM Hart 03/01	**1m 35.728s**	1m37.409s
11 De Angelis	John Player Special Team Lotus	Lotus Renault 97T/3 (6: 97T/1)	**1m 28.081**	2m 00.480s
12 Senna	John Player Special Team Lotus	Lotus-Renault 97T/2	1m 28.705s	**1m 28.389s**
15 Tambay	Equipe Renault Elf	Renault RE60/04 (T: RE60/02)	**1m 30.254s**	1m 30.516s
16 Warwick	Equipe Renault Elf	Renault RE60/03	1m 31.533	**1m 30.100s**
17 Berger	Arrows Racing Team Ltd	Arrows-BMW A8/2 (T: A8/3)	1m 34.949s	**1m 34.773s**
18 Boutsen	Arrows Racing Team Ltd	Arrows-BMW A8/1	1m 32.207s	**1m 30.953s**
21 Baldi	Spirit	Spirit-Hart 101D/02	**1m41.330s**	
22 Patrese	Benetton Euroracing	Alfa Romeo 185T/1 (6: 184T)	1m 32.107s	**1m 31.790s**
23 Cheever	Benetton Euroracing	Alfa Romeo 185T/2	1m 33.094s	**1m 33.091s**
24 Ghinzani	Osella Squadra Course	Osella Alfa FA1-G85/02 (T: FA1-B85/01)	1m 38.272	**1m 36.743s**
25 De Cesaris	Ligier Sport	Ligier-Renault JS25 01 (T: JS25/03)	1m 33.718s	**1m 31.411s**
26 Laffite	Ligier Renault	Ligier-Renault JS25/02	1m 37.803s	**1m 32.021s**
27 Alboreto	Ferrari SpA	Ferrari 156/85/079 (T: 156/85/079)	1m 28.899s	**1m 27.768s**
28 Arnoux	Ferrari SpA	Ferrari 156/85/080	1m 30.813s	**1m 29.612s**
29 Martini	Minardi Team SpA	Minardi Ford M185/001	**1m 44.046s**	

LAP BY LAP

F1: BRAZILIAN GP

Pos. lap	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Grid	27	6	11	12	5	2	28	7	1	16	15	18	25	22	26	9	8	23	17	10	3	24	4	21	29	
1	6	27	2	12	11	28	7	1	22	25	15	26	23	3	9	16	17	4	8	24	10	29	18	21	5	
2	6	27	2	12	11	28	7	1	22	25	15	23	26	3	16	17	9	8	4	24	10	18	29	21	5	
3	6	27	2	12	11	28	1	22	25	15	23	26	16	3	17	8	9	4	18	24	10	29	5	21		
4	6	27	2	12	11	28	1	25	22	15	23	26	16	3	8	17	9	4	18	24	10	29	5	21		
5	6	27	2	12	11	28	1	25	22	15	23	26	16	8	3	17	18	9	4	10	24	29	5	21		
6	6	27	2	12	11	28	1	25	22	15	23	26	16	8	3	17	18	9	4	10	24	29	5	21		
7	6	27	2	12	11	28	1	25	22	15	23	26	8	16	3	17	18	9	4	10	24	29	5			
8	6	27	2	12	11	1	28	25	22	15	23	26	8	16	3	18	17	9	4	10	24	29				
9	6	27	2	12	11	1	28	25	22	15	23	26	8	16	3	18	17	9	4	10	24	29				
10	27	2	12	11	1	6	28	25	22	15	26	23	18	16	17	3	9	4	10	24	29					
11	27	2	12	2	11	28	25	22	15	26	23	18	16	17	16	3	9	10	4	24	29					
12	27	2	12	1	11	28	25	22	15	26	23	18	17	16	3	9	10	3	4	24	29					
13	27	2	12	1	11	28	25	22	15	26	23	18	17	16	3	10	9	4	4	24	29					
14	27	2	1	12	11	28	25	22	15	26	23	18	17	16	10	9	4	3	24	3	29					
15	27	2	1	12	11	28	25	22	26	15	23	18	17	10	16	9	4	24	3	29	16					
16	27	2	1	12	11	28	25	22	26	15	23	18	17	10	9	4	24	3	29	16						
17	27	2	1	12	11	28	25	22	26	15	23	18	17	10	9	4	24	3	29	16						
18	2	27	1	12	11	28	25	22	26	15	23	18	17	10	9	4	24	3	29	16						
19	2	27	1	12	11	28	25	22	26	15	23	18	17	10	9	4	24	3	29	23	16					
20	2	27	1	12	11	28	25	26	15	18	17	10	22	9	4	24	3	29	23	16						
21	2	27	1	12	11	28	25	15	18	10	17	9	4	24	3	26	29	23	16							
22	2	27	1	12	11	28	25	15	18	10	17	9	4	26	3	24	29	23	16							
23	2	27	1	12	11	28	25	15	18	10	17	9	4	26	3	24	29	23	16							
24	2	27	12	1	11	28	25	15	18	10	17	9	4	26	3	24	29	23	16							
25	2	27	12	11	28	25	15	18	10	17	4	9	26	3	24	23	16	1	29							
26	2	27	12	28	25	11	15	10	17	4	9	18	26	3	24	23	16	1								
27	2	27	12	28	11	15	10	17	18	26	4	9	3	24	23	16	1	29								
28	2	27	12	11	10	15	17	18	26	4	9	3	28	24	23	16	29									
29	2	27	12	11	10	15	18	26	17	4	9	3	24	28	23	16	29									
30	2	12	27	11	10	15	18	26	4	3	9	28	24	17	23	16	29									
31	2	27	12	11	10	15	18	26	4	3	9	28	24	17	23	16	29									
32	2	27	12	11	15	10	26	18	3	4	9	28	24	17	23	16	29									
33	2	27	12	11	15	10	26	18	3	4	28	9	24	17	23	16	29									
34	2	27	12	11	15	10	26	18	3	28	9	4	24	17	23	16	29									
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■ Starting grid position
□ On leader's lap
▒ 1 lap behind leader
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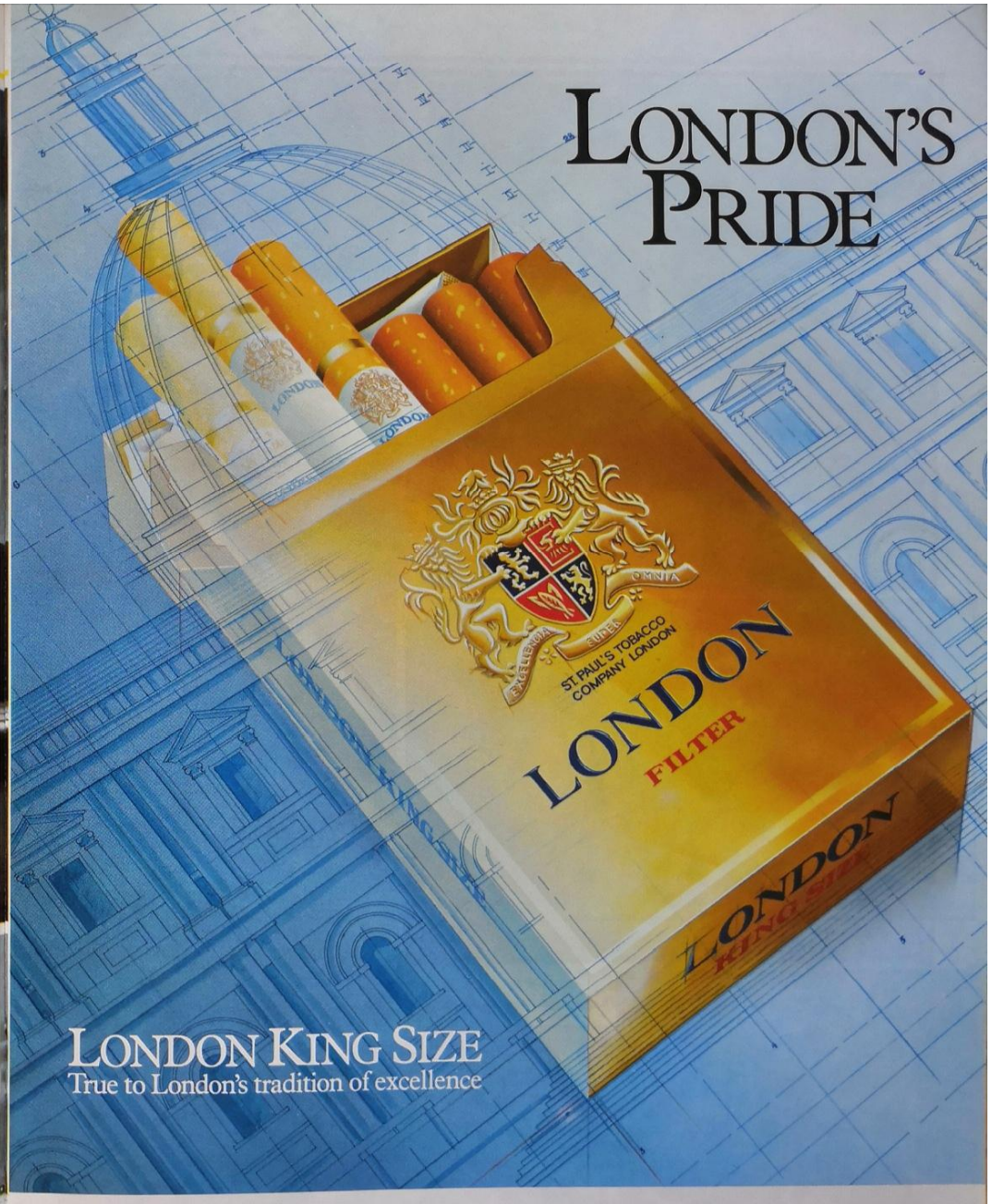
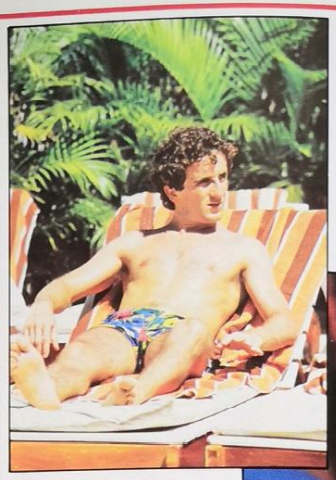


MIDDLE TAR As defined by H.M. Government
DANGER: Government Health WARNING:
CIGARETTES CAN SERIOUSLY DAMAGE YOUR HEALTH

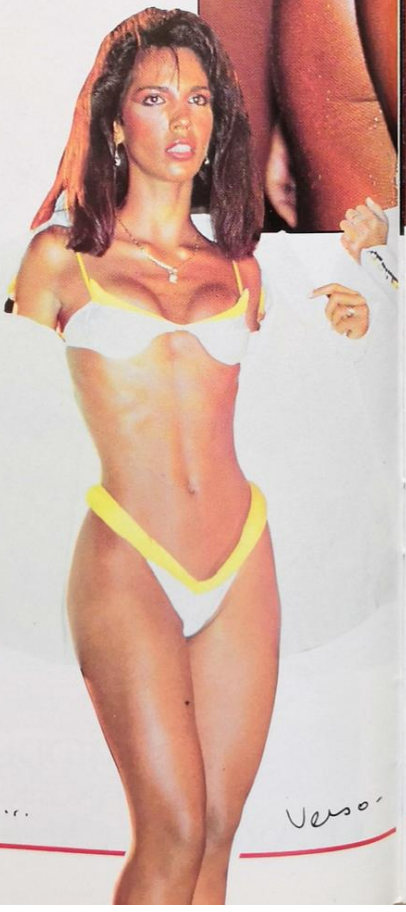


Alain's spying

RIO

French family ...
... and brazilian gloves.

Recto ...



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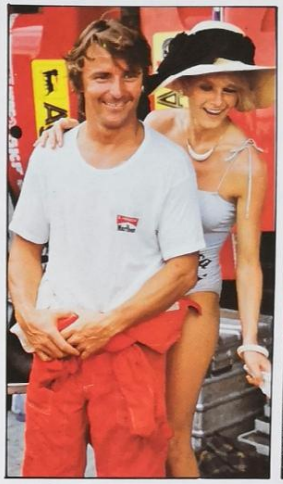
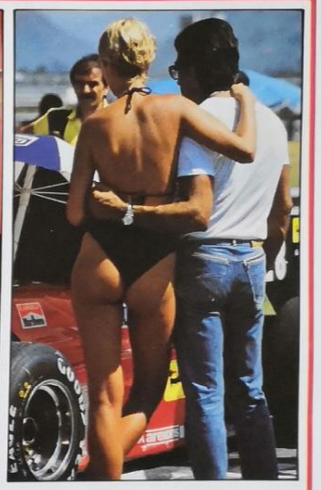
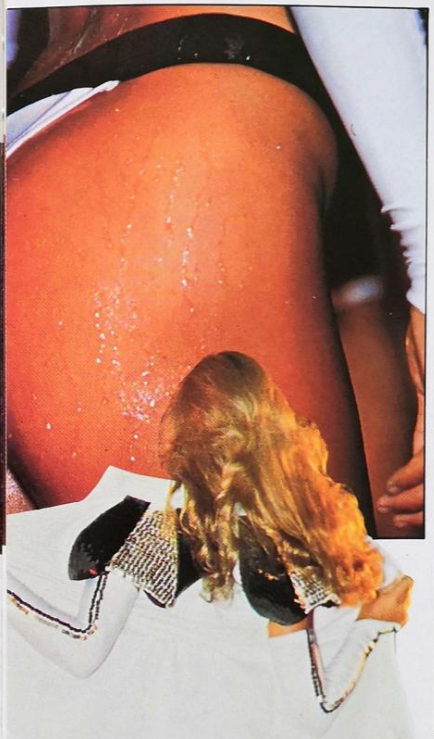
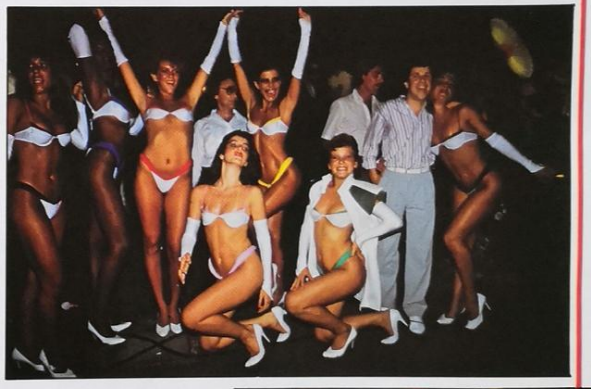


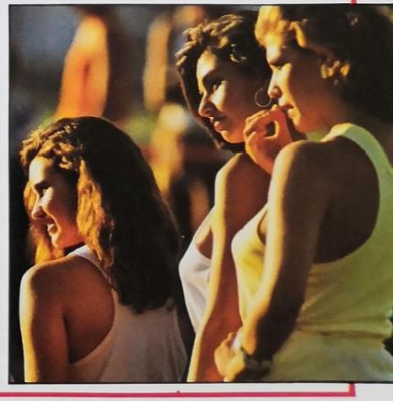


Rowdy party ? Ferrari corner.



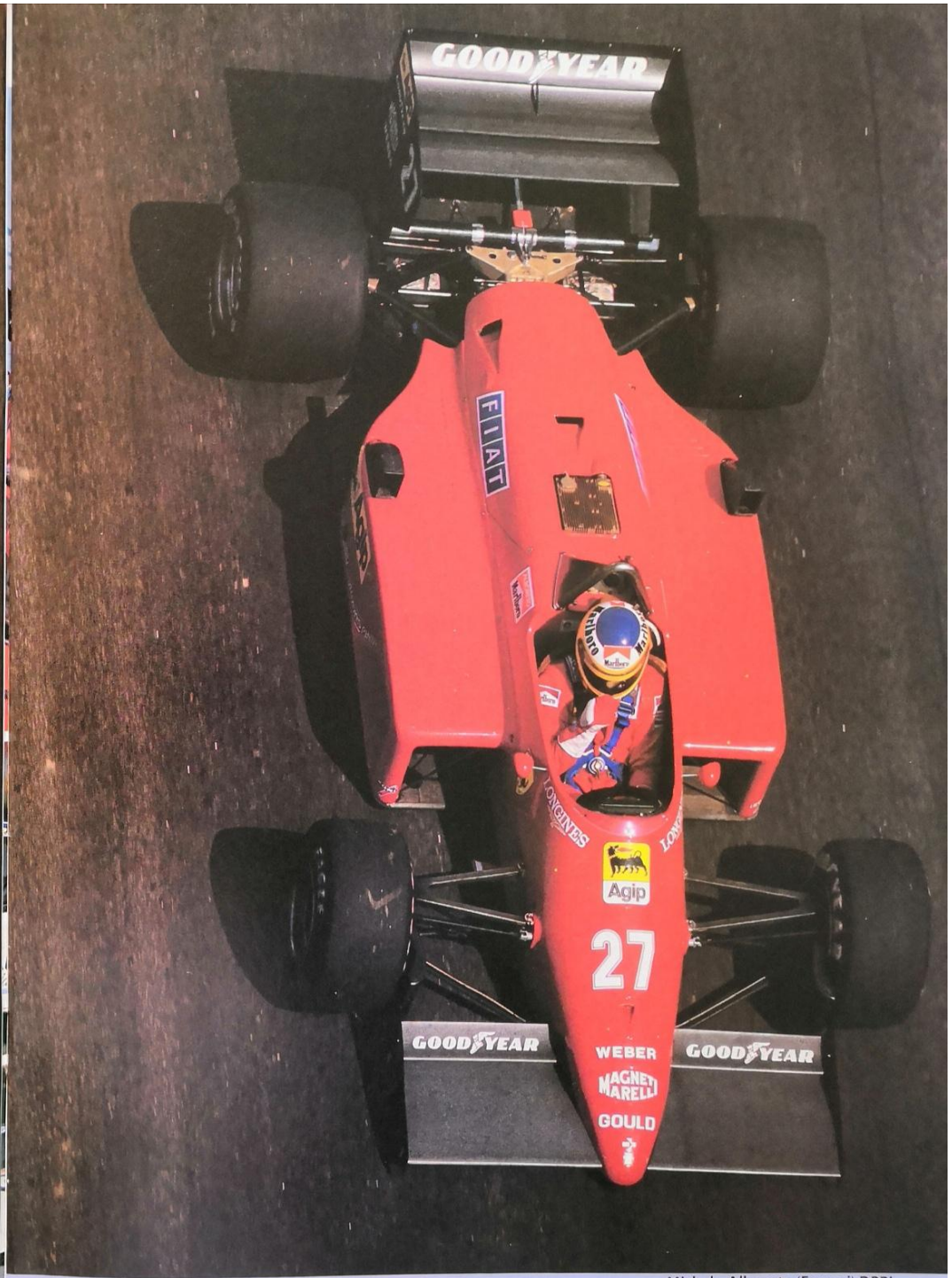


Bernie + "Lola"



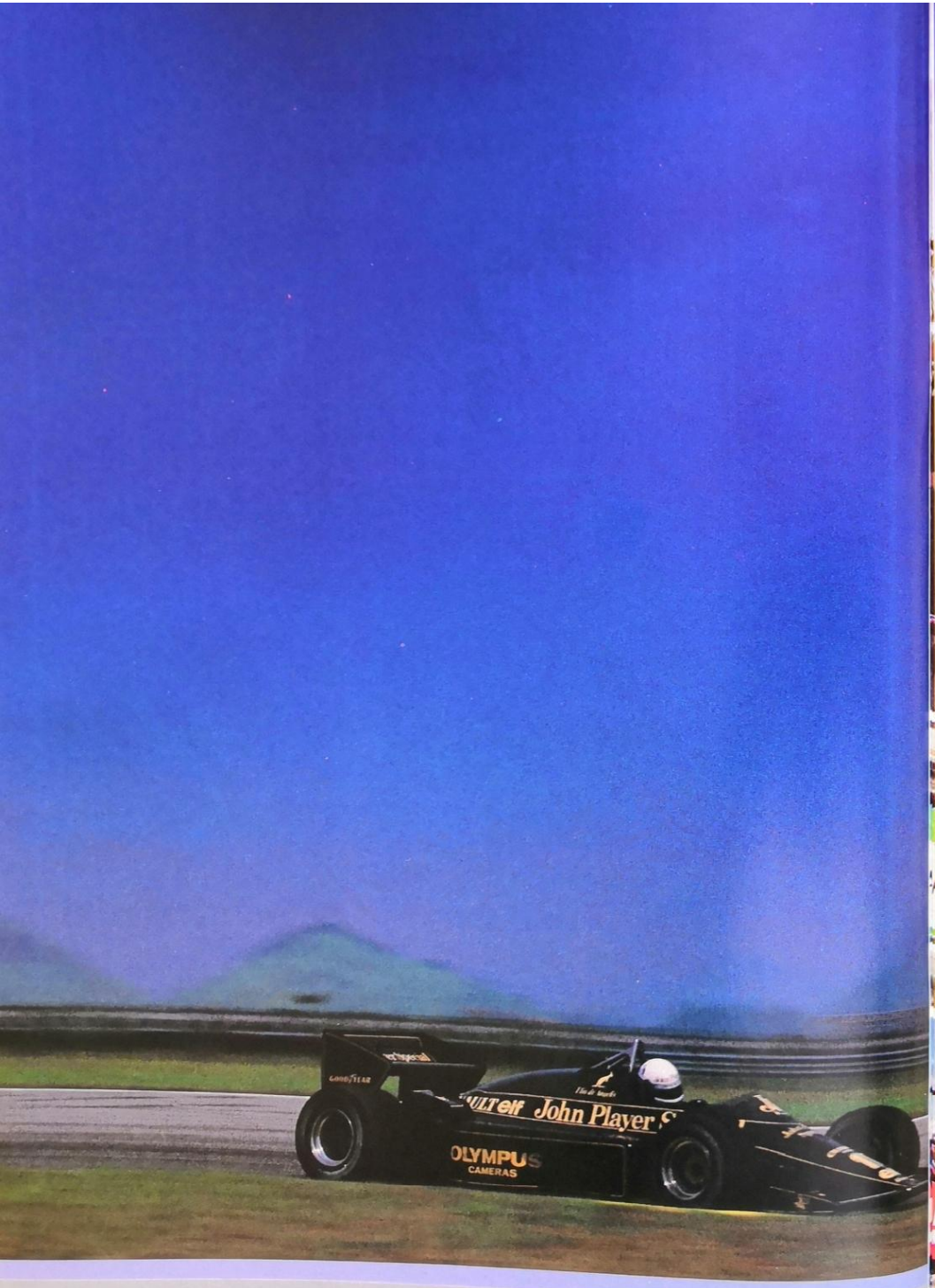
Jacques Laffite (Ligier Renault) DPPI

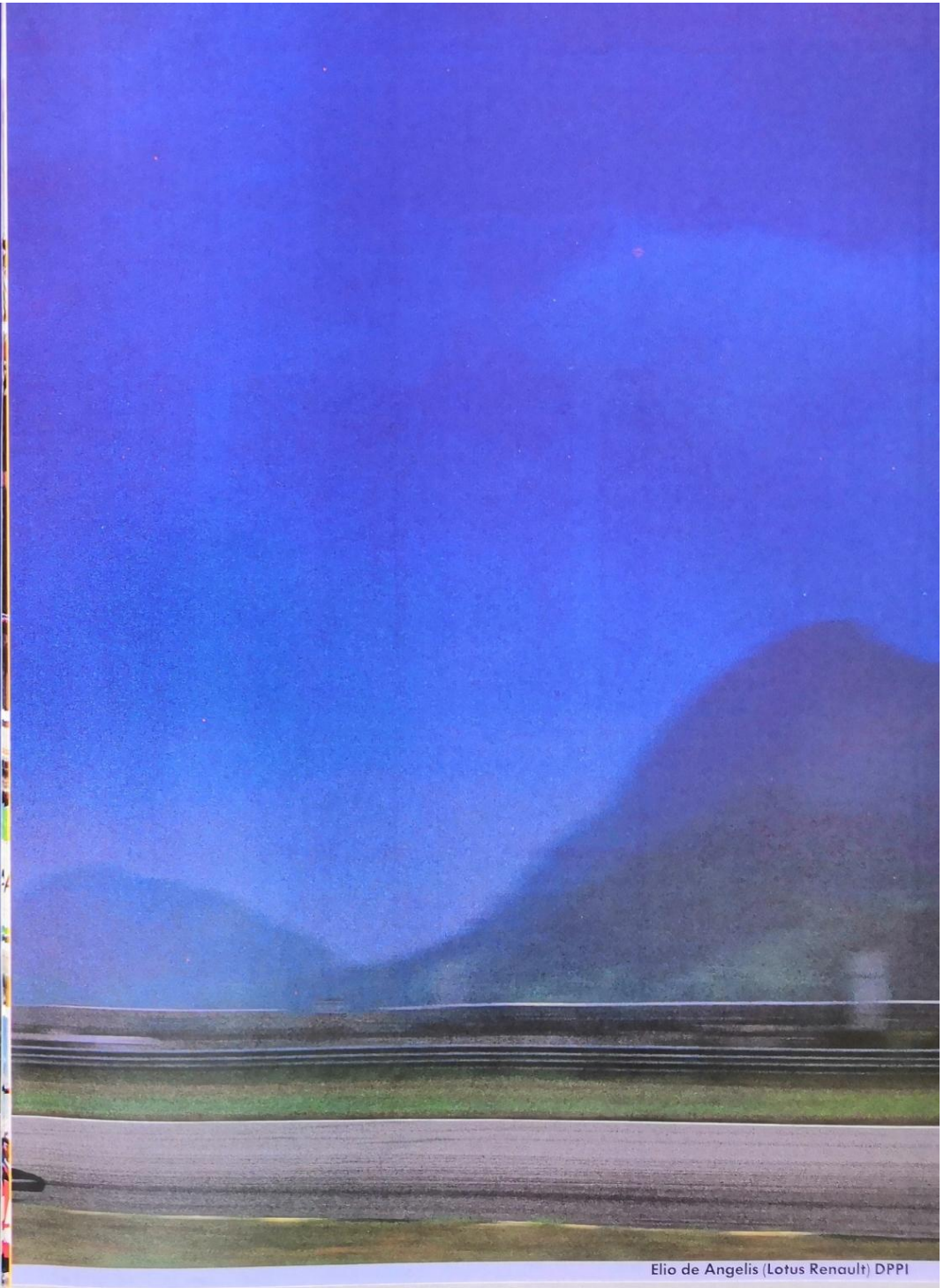
A POINT AT THEIR FIRST RACE TOGETHER



Michele Alboreto (Ferrari) DPPI

ALBORETO PUT IN THE SECOND FASTEST RACE LAP





Elio de Angelis (Lotus Renault) DPPI

AN EXCELLENT OPENING ROUND FOR THE ITALIAN AND HIS LOTUS ON THE CIRCUIT OF JACAREPAGUA

McLaren at the Brazilian GP (DPPI)

THE NEW SEASON HAS COMMENCED EXACTLY WHERE 1984 LEFT OFF. MCLAREN ARE BACK IN ORBIT!

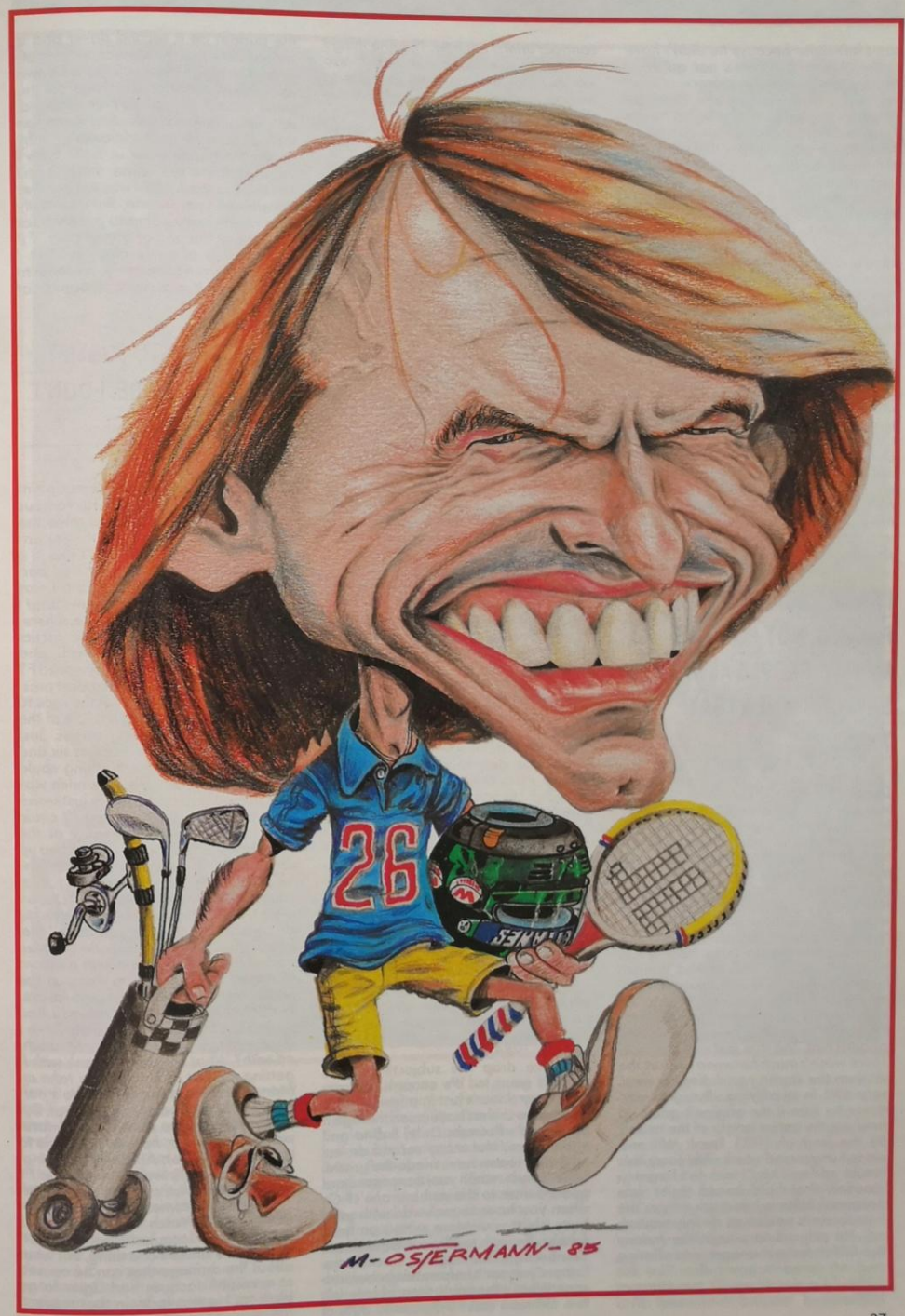
FORGIVE AND FORGET

JACQUES LAFFITE HAS REMAINED VERY MUCH THE SAME MAN HE WAS WHEN HE STARTED OUT IN FORMULA ONE ELEVEN YEARS AGO. TODAY AT THE AGE OF FORTY TWO, HIS CANNY WAY OF ANALYSING SITUATIONS, HIS DIRECT WAY OF TALKING AS HE PEERS AT YOU THROUGH HIS HAWK-LIKE EYES KEEP YOU JUST AS FASCINATED AS EVER. THE OLD CHARISMA IS STILL THERE.

by Harry Roberts

Warmly wrapped up in his bulky blue Ligier-Gitanes anorak Jacques Laffite was characteristically jiggling up and down as he reminisced over the past few years. Something of a naturally gifted philosopher he is neither regretful nor self-reproachful about anything he has done. He is surprisingly candid about himself. The words gush forth from his mouth as he endeavours to give you the bare facts. It doesn't matter whether you believe him or not. He is extremely sharp-minded and alert and if you don't follow his train of thought, you're lost in a whirlpool leaving you dazed. How can anyone think and talk so fast without confusing themselves! Is it the money, or perhaps the double-handedness of his "friends" on the circuits, or perhaps a reaction to the stingy shallow people he has been brought to work with. He ascribes it more to intelligence, a simple form of intelligence, which has nothing to do with the way he's been brought up and is nothing that has been transmitted down to him. He enjoys talking but not idly, not just to while the time away. He's always got a message he wants to get across. He's thought a great deal about a great many things and you often have to admit that he's right. He knows what he's saying. Don't pay any attention to that wicked twinkle in his eyes. You won't catch Jacques with his pants down!

He was going over how he left his long-standing friend Guy to team up with another friend — Frank. Friendships often suffer a profound alteration once money makes its entrance. The day that Jacques was paid to drive, ie, to work, nothing was the same any more. He became the employee and Frank the employer. In 1974 and 1976 a handshake had sufficed for one to develop his driving talents and for the other his competence as team manager. Yes, those were the good old days, all right. In 1976, Ligier and Laffite, the 100% French team, made their entry into F1. It was an association that was to last all of seven years, providing many happy memories, with the exception of 1980 when they missed clinching the world title because the Vichy-based team needed a further £100,000 to complete their wind tunnel testing programme. "*We didn't realise that the upper part of the side pods were becoming distorted.*" A pity because he'd had a terrific season and the following year he fought just as hard. Does the 1981 Canadian GP mean anything to you? Remember the appalling driving conditions? If there is one thing Jacques hates on the circuits it has to be rain. And he won with it teeming down! He was also awarded the Wolf Trophy at the ripe old age of 37 in recognition of his fighting spirit. Then came 1982. He had finally made up his mind to leave Ligier. "*I left for a number of reasons. I'd been with Guy for seven straight years and we'd become too accustomed to each other's ways. Williams had already offered me a drive in 1981 but Jones wasn't still sure whether he was staying or quitting. I couldn't let Guy wait until Christmas for my decision. So, when a firm offer came through at the end of 1982 I accepted. The Ligier team wasn't putting in such good results as before. Jabouille wasn't getting on too well with the team members and despite all the hard work and effort, there were no results to speak of. I was perhaps partly to blame for the non-success. I felt that I ought to leave. I'd raced in 130 GPs and it was high time I took stock of my situation. I needed something different to motivate me. The problems at Ligier weren't serious at all. I just wanted a change. I'd had enough. That was just when I began thinking about going to Williams. They were the best outfit at the time and I was really eager. I'd known Frank for ages and he was about to fit his cars with turbo engines. I know some people*



say I left Ligier because he didn't have turbo power, but that's not quite all there is to it. The real problem was that I wanted to do something else. I wanted to go to England. All the British teams become World Champions sooner or later. No-one but Ferrari can beat them. I wanted to know the why and the wherefore."

Laffite joined his friend Frank towards the end of 1982. The team operated in a completely different manner. They were highly organised, extremely efficient and their work policy was like none other he'd come across. They also had the means to do what they wanted. Their budget was decidedly higher than that of the average F1 team at the time. Unfortunately, it was not smooth sailing.

"Even the most productive of teams can't achieve much if they haven't got a good car. It doesn't matter how much money a team has, if the material's inadequately developed, they're sunk. OK, so Rosberg won a couple of GPs. Dallas and Monaco to be exact. They're not the kind of circuits that push the engines to the limit. He was also lucky. Naturally, I too, would have liked to have scored those victories, but when you think about it it's not much in two seasons, is it? Nothing at all."

I RACE BECAUSE I LOVE RACING, NOT FOR THE MONEY. PEOPLE ALWAYS SNIGGER WHEN I SAY THAT...

During his time at Williams, Jacques was constantly being compared to his team mate Rosberg. A fast, brutal and, on occasions, a lucky driver. Jacques took part in a handful of sombre rounds and didn't qualify for a place on the grid twice. At Brands Hatch and at Monza. He punctured at the British round and in Italy he was on Goodyear qualifying rubber. Impossible to qualify on new experimental tyres. So why did he try? Because Frank asked him to. Simple as that. *"I didn't take the comparing with Keke too badly because I knew that we didn't have identical cars. There was no point in measuring myself against him. The true test was the race. There wasn't much between us. Just the slots on the starting grid. Keke is very, very fast in qualifying. But, you can never be sure if the engine's going to hold out the entire length of the race."*

By the end of 1983 Frank Williams wasn't impressed at all with Jacques's results and told him. He didn't forget to mention that he'd heard Ligier was prepared to have him back either. The Frenchman's pride was deeply wounded. He refused to accept the money the British team manager was offering and accepted a great deal less for 1984. *"I'd signed on for two years at Williams. I wanted to honour that contract until it expired. The one thing I wanted was a good car and I also wanted to know just how the Honda engine performed. It wouldn't have done me much good had I gone to Ligier at the end of 1983. Guy, too, was going turbo and his team wasn't quite sure what was happening. No, I honestly thought it wiser to stick to my contract. The money was a different problem entirely and I didn't want to think about that at all. I race because I love racing. Not for the money. I always hear people sniggering when I say that. But it's true, and I've proved it on more than one occasion."*

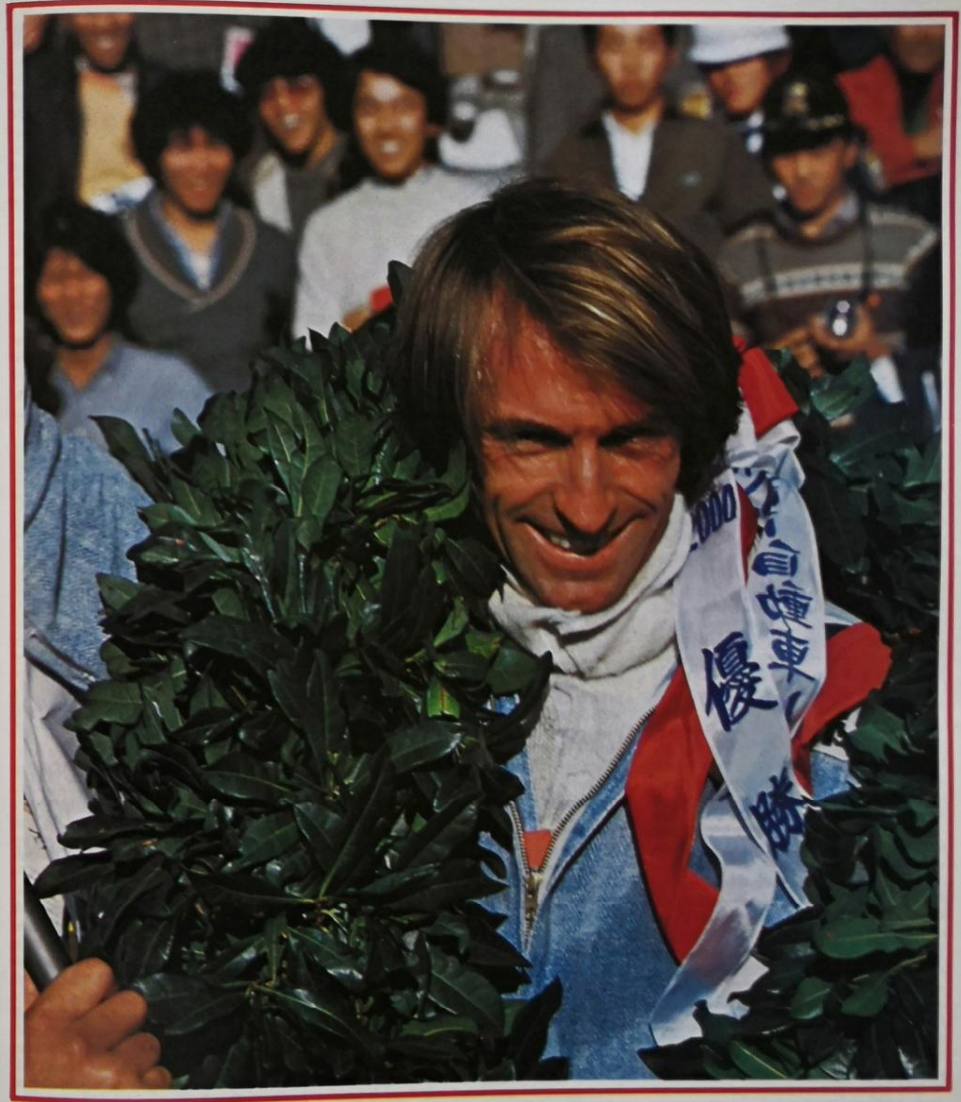
And so Laffite found himself in more or less the same situation during the 1984 championship. Qualifying was again an abysmal affair — he retired during most of the races. As we talked, Jacques explained what happened, why he couldn't battle — even gamely. He sighed, tossing his head up to get his fringe out of the way. *"I don't know if it's really worth going over all that now. Anyway, doesn't matter. And I'm not just making excuses! I don't care, the results are all awful. So are Keke's. William's results have been appalling for two years now even though there have been a few bright spots here and there."* Jacques is actually bitter about the whole affair. Frustrated and a little angry. *"I was always asked to turn up the boost pressure just so much. To 3.3 to be precise whilst Rosberg was on 3.6 to 3.9. Why him and not me? I don't know. All I can say is that I obeyed orders. I just did what I was told like a good little boy until I'd had enough. Then, I too, ran on 3.9."* The car's output improved. Not much, though, because that wasn't the answer to the problem. There was definitely a good reason behind Jacques only turning his boost up to 3.3. His engine wasn't designed to withstand more. But, Rosberg's was. *"At Renault and elsewhere, they have special engines just for qualifying. I believe that was the case for Rosberg and not for me. I had to fight hard, I was giving my all. And for what? For nothing. I knew that I wasn't in my right place on the starting grids, or within the pack. You can ask me to do anything, but there's no way I can beat Rosberg with a handicap of 100 bhp! Since I started racing I've shown that I can be quick when I need to be and when I could. That is, when I was driving a competitive car. In short, those are the problems I had in 1984."*

Shall we drop the subject? No, he doesn't want to. It's enough to wear down any driver's lust in a few months. Numerous drivers have been through it all before - Patrese, Daly, Laffite and many more. Not many second drivers on British teams have made the grade. How can you when your car concedes a good 8 mph to the number one's? Or when you have to make do with used tyres whilst your team mate's on fresh rubber. Enough to kill your enthusiasm. You become the laughing stock as the 'others' just can't help making comparisons. What's the point, then, of entering two GP race cars? Why spend 30% of the budget on a second driver and a second car if they have no chance whatever of shining? How can there be two so unfairly considered drivers on the same team? *"I couldn't understand. After all, Frank was spending money on me to race. It was ridiculous. Why couldn't he have used us both fairly? Perhaps there are some things I still haven't grasped. 1984 was yet another transitional year for me. But I honestly didn't think I was going to get the sack like that at the end of the season. If it was because of my results, I protest. I was never given competitive material to record any. It was very dishonest of him."*

I DON'T HAVE TO JUSTIFY MYSELF ANYMORE. I DON'T EVEN WANT TO

Originally, Jacques's contract made him absolutely equal with Rosberg. Famous last words. He also had to solve the problem of proving his worth. Yet another blind bargain to fulfil. *"I was in a tricky situation in that Keke was perfectly integrated into the team. I was accepted too, but I had to prove that I could finish a race, for example, whereas he didn't."* Jacques's race tactics were perfectly straightforward, and quite in keeping with an experienced F1 driver like himself. Moderate boost pressure during the early part of the race to save on fuel and a slight twiddle of the knob towards the closing stages. Just enough to finish within the first six and notch up a few points. Nothing could have been simpler. The only hitch was that Jacques only took part in just seven GPs during the 1984 series! *"I could only have finished favourably at the grand total of two rounds. Estoril was up on the cards but the engine cover flew off and at Kyalami I was lying third when I lost a wheel. Dallas and Detroit were the only GPs where I managed to do something. How do you think I feel about that! How can anyone form an honest opinion about me with a record like that? I was forced to retire at the remaining rounds due to engine failure. Not to mention all the problems I had during qualifying. What exactly have I done wrong? What can I be reproached with? What I reproach Frank with is getting me out of his team to take on Mansell. He's a good driver. He's perhaps faster than I am, I accept that. But if they give him the same kind of material they gave me, he won't be able to do anything either. Absolutely nothing. Zilch. If you really want to know, no F1 driver is ever twice as quick as another. The difference comes from the cars, not the drivers."* Watch it! We've hit his Achilles heel. Jacques lashes out. Getting rid of a driver's one thing, but what about the damage that can be caused as a result? Jacques had Ligier to go back to. He was lucky in that respect. *"Where's Mansell going to go on to if Frank chucks him out, too? He won't have any results to boast of. I only wish that Frank would realise that. What really gets me is that he got rid of me knowing full well that in private testing I wasn't far off Rosberg's times."* Because they were both driving the same car. Thus ended their friendship.

"I've said enough. I don't have to justify myself any more. I don't even want to now. I've grown out of all that. I myself decided to continue racing in F1. No-one forced me in to it. I don't have to make up any old excuses. Especially now that Guy has taken me on with him again." Jacques will be going back to Vichy that much richer in experience, rigour and humility after his two years in England. A little sad, no doubt, that he just couldn't adapt to working with the Brits. Perhaps it stemmed from the language problem. *"From the humane point of view I think I was fairly well integrated, the language wasn't really that much of a problem — I just stuck words together as they came. But Frank speaks very good French, you know, and he helped me enormously. It wasn't the same kettle of fish with the others, though. Mansell, in that respect, will have a great advantage over me. It won't make the slightest bit of difference Nigel asking for what he wants in English. If they don't want to give it to him, they won't. On the other hand, he will be able to say exactly what he means. Just like Daly used to, but it didn't help him much either. Mind you, I'm refering to feelings, self-expression, understanding. It could be that we're on entirely different wave-lengths altogether and I just never realised. After all this is F1 racing, not a theatre. By that I mean that a F1 team's prime objective is to provide the most competitive*



material within its power and our role is to drive as fast as we know how to. That is F1, nothing else. It's also entails mutual confidence rather than waging war. It's a shame that not everyone agrees there."

Never once did Jacques bring the main subject into the conversation — the FW09. Not a good car according to his standards but satisfactory enough for Rosberg and his acrobatic skills to achieve some impressive lappery. Frank, naturally, would not hear anything against the FW09. The chassis, that is. The problem came from the engine. *"His chassis was neither particularly outstanding nor really bad. The engine wasn't perfect either. A couple of wins together with some good lap times didn't prove much. Qualifying was often a good time for unnecessary exuberance — riding over the kerbs, high boost pressure and soft rubber. What really mattered were the points. The car simply wasn't competitive and Williams's team should have reacted differently especially since they had both the financial and technical means to produce a high-performing package."* Make no mistake, Laffite is not embittered nor does he hold his bad results against Frank. Now that he's over the trauma of being given the axe, he admits that he learned a lot from his two years with the Brits. He knows his stuff that much better and reckons that, in fact, it was worth living through. He certainly doesn't feel he wasted either his time or his energy. He changed his lifestyle. He worked very hard and learned how to fend for himself. By himself. During his seven years at Ligier he'd never had to. Ducarouge, Jabouille and Guénard were all there to help and reassure him when he needed them. He could always depend on them. *"Neil Oatley used to lend me his support but that was about it. He's over at Lola now. To my way of thinking he just didn't want anything more to do with a car that he knew stood no chance of winning. I remember well that on some occasions he even advised me to keep the same engine rather than change it as I wouldn't get a better one. Which sums up the situation very well. I played along according to their rules simply because I'd signed a two-year contract. I tried to make them see differently and to what good, may I ask? I got the sack! From an entirely professional point of view, however, my mind's at ease — I did my job. I hope I'll be able to put my experience to good use at Ligier. I hope the car's going to prove itself a worthy rival. What a stroke of luck that Guy's taken me on again! He didn't have to. I had nothing to boast of after those two seasons at Williams. He took me back on trust. No questions were asked. We've known each other too long for that."*

Ligier/Laffite. France's all-blue effort brings to mind their many successes together. They can't fail to draw the fans. If, of course, the JS25 delivers as much as it promises. The results will speak for themselves. Laffite will once again come into his own. He deserves to regain recognition. Guy is still the same — as temperamental and impassioned as ever. And Jacques wouldn't wish him to be any different. He'll be with Michel Tétu and Gérard Larrousse once more. Good back-up has been brought in to reinforce the team. Not to mention de Cesaris, the young high-mettled Italian whose Latin blood and *savoir-vivre* bring the two drivers automatically closer than was possible with Rosberg. *"It was obvious that Guy would have to restructure his team. He had no alternative. He has the knack of saving himself from desperate situations before it's too late.*

I DON'T ENJOY FLIRTING WITH DEATH AS MUCH AS I USED TO. DID I EVER?

He's set on the right path now and he'll cope. It was either that or closing down, which he would never have accepted. All the ingredients seem to be there. Andrea is a good driver. The JS25 appears healthy enough from the few laps I've put in behind the wheel and the Renault block, too, seems to have greatly improved over the winter. Just, look at the results achieved by Lotus. It's all starting to look up."

At the time of our talk Jacques revealed yet another facet to his character — he had agreed to drive for Ligier and where was the contract? There was plenty of time to settle all the paper work. First things first. Guy's still got a pile to sort out and his word is as good as his bond. Jacques knows that. It's always been like that and there's no reason why things should have changed. Guy did not stand in his driver's way when he announced his decision to leave. He was a free agent. And when Jacques came back, he was warmly welcomed. An enduring friendship that has withstood the test of time. At the age of 42 with eleven seasons in F1 behind him he'll be quick to honour his word when the motivation starts to flicker and pull out gracefully. For most the flame would have died but Jacques's is still very much alive and blazing.

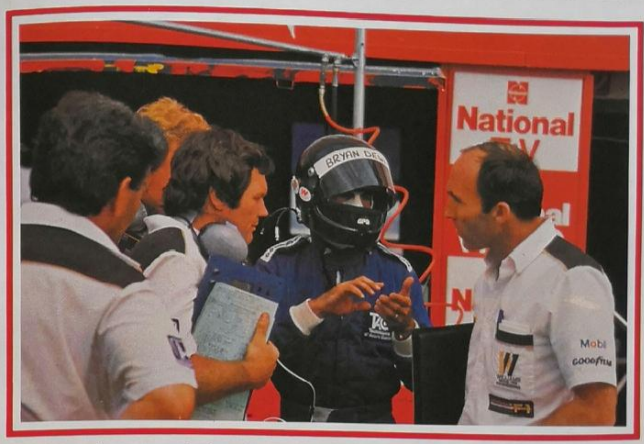
Most people don't care two hoots about all that — what they see is his date of birth, November 21, 1943, and rise to the bait. *"Laffite's past it. It's high time he stopped F1 and went into Production. He's too old now for that sort of thing. He doesn't even get a kick out of going to the circuits any more. There's nothing left in him."* Those are just a few examples of the comments made when his Williams's grid positions were announced. *"The problem isn't really that I'm showing my age. I agree that I don't enjoying flirting with death as much as I used to. But did I ever? That's not how races are won. OK, I agree the throttle pedal won't be down hard to the floorboard through Signes on the Ricard circuit like de Cesaris. That's one advantage in his favour which I concede in view of his youth and his ambition. But there won't be any others, believe me. The public pay too much attention to age. That's not important to a driver. Take the example of Andretti. At 45 he's a great Indy driver, one of the best. He was voted the 1984 Driver of the Year for the third time in his long career! He returned to the world of F1 after a year's absence at 42 when he joined Ferrari. And what did he do? He calmly slipped in pole position, no less, at Monza. I'm in tip-top physical shape. I still take life as it comes without torturing myself with silly questions the whole time. Ligier took me back because we're friends and, if necessary, I'll retire for the same reason. If ever I should feel that I wasn't up to it any more. I don't believe in forcing myself to do something and Guy knows that. When that day comes he won't have to ask me to leave or suggest that it's time. It'll just happen and as soon as I feel it coming, I know that I can talk to him about it. All I want to do now is get back into my rightful slot. Once the team's there behind you and you're on competitive material, there's nothing to stop you from getting where you want to go."* Will it be easy having a team mate like de Cesaris to contend with? The Italian has taken charge of development on the JS25 as though he were the official number one driver. Jacques just comes in now and again to confirm his impressions. *"To all intents and purposes we are equal except that Andrea has been at Ligier since the end of 1983 and he started driving the JS25 before I did. He is in a better position to compare it with the JS23 and to speed up development.*

ELEVEN YEARS IN F1 FORM A MAN'S CHARACTER, YOU CAN'T REMAIN INDIFFERENT

The only point of reference I have is with the Honda. Once Renault supply us with the EF15, of which Ligier will only get one block to begin with, it will go to Andrea which is only fair. At the following round, I'll get it. I don't particularly want to work out a complicated sharing programme and that wouldn't be in keeping with the interests of the team either. I just want you to understand that all I want is for Ligier-Gitanes to get back on the right road and I hope that with my help... that's what's motivating me. I wouldn't be here if I were lacking in motivation and that's perhaps the real difference between a 42-year old driver like myself and a younger one. It's not the age that matters but how you envisage life. Eleven years in F1 form a man's character, you can't remain indifferent."

As de Cesaris is still leading development work on the JS25 Jacques isn't absolutely sure what to think of his new car. With Michel Tétu, however, in charge, it will undoubtedly be a good one. Fitted with the Renault V6, too. It remains to be seen whether the Pirelli rubber will prove to be adequate but in view of Brabham's results, it has improved in leaps and bounds. Jacques is glad of his move from the Honda-Williams team. *"The Honda has only been out for a year, so it's not fair to be too critical. On the other hand, I was really pleasantly surprised by the Renault block. Once the engineers have solved the fuel consumption problem — which shouldn't be too long now with the electronic injection — it'll be fantastic. Just look at Senna's times at the Rio tests. It seems promising to say the least. Don't forget I'll be driving a Renault engine inside a Ligier chassis fitted with Pirellis. You know that when you join a team, you think positive. That it's the best team, or that it will be the best. How can I not be enthusiastic? You won't catch me saying that Renault, Pirelli and Ligier are all rubbish. If I even thought they were I wouldn't have joined the team. Yes, we would have preferred to have the TAG-Porsche but it wasn't available and there's nothing we can do about that except accept the fact and carry on doing our best to the very end. I'm a professional racing driver and the engineers at TAG, Ferrari, Renault, Honda or Hart are all — just like the drivers — made of the same stuff. The boffins at Renault are just as good as those at Porsche. Mechanics and engines are part of a precise science. Engines are designed along the same lines, using the same construction materials and the brains behind them are all very much of a muchness too. I can't say anything against the Renault engine for the moment. If I'm disappointed during the season I'll say so. In the meanwhile, I believe that it'll be competitive."* And so life continues! Jacques doesn't feel an entirely free man. He didn't want to go back to Ligier like that. He had told us during last season what he considered to be the optimum conditions for an eventual return home to his 'family' — a good string of results and a light halo of glory from his stay in England. Just enough to prevent people saying he was going home because he had no where else to go. Because at Vichy Guy was offering him a drive — no-one else was. Or because he needed the cash. His career at that point wasn't exactly rewarding financially. He didn't get his string of good results, neither did he get the cash. Laffite is not a born businessman. He is unconcerned. His father was a lawyer from Paris and Jacques spent two years at law school. He too, was promised a brilliant career in the law courts. He's got the gift of the gab and can bring round even the toughest of customers. Instead, he started tinkering on his brother-in-law's — Jabouille — car. If that's not passion, then what is! His attitude to money is much the same. For example, nothing could have stopped him from leaving Williams in 1983, which would have entailed receiving the whole of his salary for 1984 as a going away present, and then joining Ligier where he would have drawn wages too. When he went to Williams, early 1983, Marlboro wanted to take him under their wing but Laffite refused in the firm belief that Gitanes would further their contract with him. Unfortunately it was not so and his driving overalls were bare of any personal contract badges. He must have lost a good £80 -£200,000 but he just shrugs his shoulders. His one luxury in life is his house in England. Financially speaking he does worry about his interests.

"What people don't understand is that taxes in France are very high for us. I don't cheat, I pay like everyone else and there's not much left at the end of the day. My name's not Rosberg, Lauda or Prost and I do not live in a tax-free haven like Monaco. My only advantage is that foreign residents in England have a 50% reduction on their taxes for two years. That represents quite a lot for me. I've got to start thinking of the future. I've got a wife and two daughters and I'm not a millionaire just because I drive F1 cars! This year I'm accepting to work for Guy for a low salary because he hasn't got the means to pay me more. No, I'm serious. I'm going to be earning much less than I was in 1979 when I was driving alongside Depailler at Ligier.



Well, that's what's happened after eleven years in F1. But, I don't regret it. It's up to me to remedy the situation. I'll find something simple, you'll see. If you think I'm going to start going to motor shows, signing autographs, giving interviews on TV or on the radio, you can think again. I won't. I'd rather spend my free time fishing or relaxing or just being with my family. Of course, I'd like to have a generous sponsor, but I'm not prepared to do just anything. I'm not a skunk." Will he stay on in England and work for a French boss? For another year possibly. *"Mainly for my daughters. They love learning a second language. And it's really for them that we're staying on. I'm surviving. I haven't got that many friends, but it's not that bad and I've developed my ways and habits. Our lease is running out in April and I'll decide then whether we stay or not."* Jacques Laffite is the same natural unpretentious person he's always been. That's his strength. The day the starting grid chart is established without his name people will be saying that something good has disappeared from F1.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PROST AND MYSELF IS ENORMOUS. HE CAN BUY HIS RECONVERSION ANY DAY. I CAN'T

His familiar smile and hearty handshake will be missed by all. A ball of nerves and hard muscle. He is naturally endearing. But Jacques would never abandon the circuits completely. He'll either find himself at the wheel of another car or perhaps take on a new role like Clerk of the Course for instance. *"Unless I'm stupid, I'll always be able to find a job in something to do with cars. After all my name is Laffite. I don't think I could leave racing just like that. I look at people like Ballot Lena, Jabouille, Beltoise and watch what they're doing. There's nothing to worry about really, with things like the Paris-Dakar and Production going on. I'm sure I'll quickly find something I enjoy and earn my living at the same time. I'll channel my energy differently, that's all. I'm not going to retire at 42 just because I'm withdrawing from F1! I've also been thinking about going into business by associating my name with a large French company in need of a more dynamic image. We could even start now while I'm in F1, and then go on with public relations."* Like Prost? *"No, not like that at all. He's young and he's got his future ahead of him — and he earns ten times more than I do! The difference between us is enormous. He can buy his reconversion any day. I can't."* Come on, Jacques, you're not alone any more. Ligier's depending on you and the fans even more. Blue for hope and for Jacques Laffite in his twelfth F1 season. ■

ARROWS A7-BMW F1 TRACK TEST

ART AND CARS

THIERRY BOUTSEN'S AT THE COMMANDS. WE'RE FLYING AT OVER 200 MPH WITH THE WIND BEHIND US. THE RPM NEEDLE INDICATES THAT THE 6-CYLINDER CONTINENTAL DOUBLE IGNITION INJECTION ENGINE IS GENTLY HUMMING ALONG AT 2500 RPM. HERE I AM BETWEEN THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA AND SET FOR A NEW ADVENTURE.

by Pierre Dieudonné

When I got home late last night, there was a message waiting for me that caused my heart to skip a beat. *"If you still want to test-drive the Arrows-BMW, meet me at 7am tomorrow at Abelag."* For those not in the know, Abelag is a common meeting place for racing drivers the world over. It's the private air terminal at Brussels Airport. Getting from one GP circuit to another reflects an exciting, if not dangerous, way of life. Having a pilot's licence has its advantages which explains why I'm sitting, not very comfortably, next to Thierry Boutsen in his single cylinder Cessna Centurion as it flies somewhat shakily over the Channel. Perhaps he'll be lucky enough to own a Lear jet one day like Niki Lauda, or a turbo-prop like Keke Rosberg and various other top 1 drivers. It'll mean a more comfortable flight but all the thrills and impressions that go with travelling in light aircraft will be lost.

Anyway, there we were at 7,200 feet. It's incredible how unimportant the problems down below appear from this unfamiliar vantage point. There's quite a lot in common between flying a private plane and driving a F1. They each give you the impression of both ruling the world and feeling as free as a bird. Just like Icarus, you realise that your life depends on the fragile shell surrounding you. Both consume your body with the firey passion that keeps you continually dicing with fate. Those are the rules which you accept. Win all or lose all in a split second.

Apart from the fantastically spicy sensations that go with risking your life as you get from A to B, you save an incredible amount of time, thereby heightening the quality of your life. For example, Thierry Boutsen left Donington after breakfast at home in Belgium. He'll put in as many laps as necessary for Arrows engineer Dave Wass to check everything that needs checking, and then he'll be back home for supper. If nothing goes wrong with the testing programme, I'll even be able to get a chance of driving the turbo BMW-engined A7 before the sun goes down. First things first. Thierry Boutsen is preparing for landing at the East Midlands airport. Once we're through customs, we'll take a taxi to Donington.

A TURBO FOR THE A7

First, let's delve into the whys and the wherefores of Arrows. It all began in the autumn of 1977 when Jackie Oliver, Alan Rees, Tony Southgate, Dave Wass and co left Don Nichols and the Shadow team to set up their own outfit. They went through some extremely hard and trying times which pushed them continually to the limit. That has resulted in a perfect understanding between businessman Oliver, team manager Rees and engineer Wass. Although Arrows are still chasing after their first GP victory, they have signed a contract with BMW the 1983 winning constructor which goes to prove how much respect this small team from Bletchley has earned itself in the world of F1.

As with GP racing in general, it's worth looking at Arrows both from the outside and the inside. Who can tell what interesting and surprising things we might learn! Take Alan Rees for example. This former F2 driver seems to have given himself a mission in life — that of spending as much of it as possible with racing cars. I hope he won't take offence but he always gives me the impression of resembling a ferocious bulldog, frightening off even the most daring intruders wanting to get a closer look at the Arrows. Once you get to know the man behind the surly mask, ie, once you're accepted as more than just another unwelcome onlooker, you realise that he's a different person entirely. The drivers are the first to agree that he has a heart of gold and he is extremely well considered by everyone in racing. I would never have thought that the people at Arrows would have been so friendly and willing to help when I accepted the invitation to test-drive their car. May I take this opportunity of thanking them for everything. And now, it's time to take the readers out for a spin in the A7, the first Arrows fitted with a turbo engine.

8000 RPM TO START OFF!

Thierry Boutsen gave me a useful piece of advice — *"Make sure you're at 8000 rpm to start off, otherwise you're going to have trouble!"*

As usual, getting into the cockpit is problematic as every inch matters. You have to twist your way around the steering wheel and carefully point your feet under the steering rack which lies over your shins once you're seated. I must admit that I felt particularly cramped but I had time to note the chassis plate with A7-3 engraved on it. It's the car in which Boutsen rode up and over Arnoux' Ferrari at Zandvoort.

The mechanics helped me adjust a couple of things so that I felt a little more at ease. While they were busy, I noticed that the shell had become somewhat classical since the fitting of the turbo BMW engine in replacement of the A6-Cosworth. It has progressed in successive stages from the original designed by Dave Wass for the A3 in 1980 after the A2 (Tony Southgate) which was a complete flop. Dave Wass based his designs on Patrick Head's Williams FW08. The shell has been constructed with aluminium honeycomb panels which gives it the advantage of being extremely light, if somewhat simple and classical. Carbon fibre was then used to strengthen areas like the interior of the cockpit. The front part of the shell under the bodywork covering the upper nose cone is boxed in between two panels which have had holes cut into them thereby giving access to certain accessories and mechanicals, ie, the instruments, cables and wires behind the dashboard, the footwell and brake balance knob, clutch and brake master cylinders, spring/damper combinations, the steering rack and the front anti-roll bar. The drivers have to make a pit stop for any adjustments apart from boost pressure which is set by the only knob in the cockpit.

Current fashion in F1 dictates that the mechanics often simply exchange certain parts like the anti-roll bar. A little weight is thus saved by not fitting an adjustment device.

Anyway, back to the test-drive. I was feeling even more jittery with all that waiting around. I switched on the ignition and the auxiliary electric fuel pump switches. I raised my hand to show the mechanic standing behind the car that he could go ahead with the compressed air and fire up the engine. The engine let out a deafening rumble. I could also hear the sound of the pneumatic starter. I was reminded of the defunct F2 BMW 12 engine — an unmelodious sound at low revs. I could feel the 4-cylinders turning over as the vibrations began to work on my back through the shell.

POWER AND DOLLARS

As I go down pit lane let me tell you a little more about the dashboard as I won't be able to give more than a furtive glance soon... which is why the Arrows instrument panel is as simple as possible: a large Contactless rev counter, graduated up to 12000 rpm, a boost pressure dial which had the needle hovering between 2.05 and 2.1 bars during my test-drive (don't forget to add 1 bar for atmospheric pressure!). This is the normal setting. There is a large warning light that comes on to warn the driver of a drop in the oil pressure and it's then up to him to cut the engine and save the team a heavy repairs bill. Each F1 BMW engine costs 180,000 DM. They have to be rebuilt every 600 km/400 miles and the Arrows team requires a total of sixteen units to race their two cars.

Firing up was a rather tricky business as were the first couple hundred yards or so out on the track, still damp in patches. There wasn't much grip as the tyres were cold. Hardly would I depress the throttle pedal than I could feel the rear sliding. I was amazed at the amount of air the huge single KKK turbo was blasting into the Bavarian 4-cylinder engine block. Words can't describe the kick you get from trying these incredible engines. The good old normally-aspirated 3-litre V8 Cosworth developing 500 bhp was guided to victory in 1982 by Keke Rosberg to clinch the world crown for the 12th time in just over 15 years of racing.

The following year BMW brought out its turbocharged 1499cc 4-cylinder engine mustering a hefty 600 bhp at 9500 bhp, the BT52, with which Nelson Piquet scooped the championship title. The compression ratio was 6.7:1 and the exhaust gas turbine was producing some 1.9 bars of boost pressure. The car steadily evolved during that season and Nelson Piquet was crowned World Champion with a good 650 bhp at his disposal by the end of the year. Today, the Arrows team is supplied with BMW Motorsport engines prepared by Heini Mader in Switzerland. The compression ratio figure has gone up to 7.5:1, boost pressure to 2.1 bars and power output to 720 bhp at 10500 rpm. Maximum torque is down on paper as 52 mkg at 8500 rpm. It's simply mind-boggling when you consider that during the Cosworth era the engines were developing 170 bhp/litre and were normally-aspirated and that today a block like the BMW M12/13 produces the equivalent of a staggering 480 bhp/litre — between nine and ten times more power than the original 4-cylinder engine from which it has evolved! And that's reckoning with race configuration output, not qualifying! The BMW can withstand boost pressure set at 2.8 bars and approximately 850 bhp, perhaps more. Just the time to put it an ultra-quick lap.

Unfortunately we haven't time to go in to how Paul Rosche and his team managed to so successfully conjure up such results out of the 4-cylinder Bavarian engine. Briefly, BMW's success in F1 stems from the investment of vast amounts of its competition budget into the 1500/2000 production model engine. Phase 1 began in 1972 with F2 when the engine was equipped with 4 valves per cylinder, a double overhead cam shaft, titanium con rods, a fuel injection system, dry symp lubrification etc, together with a good measure of the experience acquired from 1977-1979 with the Group 5 turbocharged 1400cc featured on the 320.

Like the F2 engine (and the 4-cylinder 316, 318i and 518i production models within 0.2 mm), the F1 block has a bore of 89.2 mm combined with a stroke of 60 mm which permits a total of 11200 rpm. The con rods are 153.6 mm long. The heart of the BMW F1 engine is a straight 4-cylinder block from the road production line made of cast iron which is stripped of the various mountings which are not needed in F1. In this way some 5 to 7 kilos are saved and certain stress points are also removed. To be sure that the block is stable BMW prefer to use only used blocks. Since the number of motors is ever increasing, this is not always possible and they often have to resort to artificial running-in techniques. However, the most incredible thing is when you consider that despite the 800-odd bhp, the basic architecture of the engine has not evolved. The crankshaft runs on five main bearings and retains the same dimensions — for both the main bearings and the con rod journals — as the production model. The complex electronic engine control system on the F1 BMW engine which is featured on various production models, is still the subject of constant development by BMW and Bosch technicians.

Dave Wass was obliged to think out the Arrows A7 within the parameters recommended by BMW concerning engine installation. The German 4-cylinder has not been designed to act as a stress member like the Cosworth V8, for example, and is enclosed within two steel tubular frames. An advantage of this power block is its compactness and once assembled with its various accessories (turbo and intercooler) only weighs in at 170 kilos. From the compressor the air is ducted from the left side (exhaust) to the intercooler on the right side (admission) by means of a large pipe and passes through the radiator into the engine plenum chamber. The four fuel injectors are screwed into the plenum chamber and fuel is pumped into the individual admission trumpets. On a circuit like Donington, for example, an estimated 70 litres are pumped per 100 km.

Tom Wheatcroft's circuit is full of twists and turns as it undulates its way through the Derbyshire countryside. The short straight and tightness of the track itself means that low gearing is required. Believe me, a one-day tester like myself is definitely in for a spectacularly thrilling and memorable drive! Despite the gearbox ratios being more suitable for maximum speed test figures, the Arrows BMW confirmed it was full of muscle — 3.1s to reach 100 kph from standstill and only 6.4s to break through the 200 kph line.

HIGH OUTPUT AND ITS HAZARDS

This tremendous power delivery caused so much stress on the Arrows A7's rear suspension that road handling was severely impaired and the tyres also tended to overheat. To remedy these two problems, the lower wishbones were replaced by trapeziums to improve on the guiding of the wheel hubs. Amongst the modifications introduced during last season, the wheelbase was lengthened with the adding of a spacer between the engine and the gearbox. Naturally, weight distribution then also became a problem and Dave Wass believes that the rear track wasn't sufficiently weighted. Poor traction out of corners was a definite weak point on the BMW-engined A7 which was a good 20-25 kilos overweight.

The tyres had warmed up a little after a couple of laps and I'd had time to get used to the feel of the car. I was accelerating harder out of the corners. It's impossible to describe the snarling wickedness of that engine — a pack of dynamite ready to explode as soon as

you depress the throttle pedal. Once the turbo comes into action, those horses bolt away all over the place. The wheels spin. The rev needle's wavering madly as you try to bring the thoroughbred racer under control. No mean feat. It's difficult to keep your own head as the engine tries to stampede away out of your hands. A task made all the more difficult when you realise that the power band lies between 8000 and 11000 rpm. The six-speed gearbox means that there's never more than 35 kph between each gear change and only 20 kph between 2nd and 3rd! And, as I said before, it takes barely more than three seconds to accelerate from 0-100 kph and about as much to reach 200 kph from there.

A NEW ART — DRIVING A F1?

Some drivers push the engine speed up to the point where the rev limiter cuts in. However, it's not a good idea to toy around too much with it as the engine responds by misfiring and the turbo suffers. Boutsen advised me to make full use of engine torque, rather than push the engine into the rev red line, accompanied by swift gear changes for which the Arrows-built Hewland gearbox has been well-designed. The rear suspension is mounted on the gearbox casing but the lower anchoring points do not appear to improve on ground effect in the slightest. The rear wings are the main elements to deal with that problem. The blasting engine performance of the Arrows virtually dominates all other sensations experienced on any other single seaters designed along similar lines. The cockpit, however, is placed very forward, almost between the front wheels. The driver is thus in a better position to see exactly where to place the car going into the turns. Grip from the huge tyres is tremendous once the ideal working temperatures have been reached. The brakes are so monstruously powerful that as you leave braking progressively later and later, it feels like the work of a miracle when the car slows down to an acceptable turn-taking speed after the flat-in-sixth dash down the straight. One also feels overall cohesion between the rigidity of the chassis coupled with the delicateness of the mechanicals and the graceful gear changes which allow the development of truely artistic driving skills.

Playing at being a F1 racing driver is no joke on a circuit like Donington. It's a bit like watching a speeded-up version of a film as you go round the track. Your brain hardly has enough time to register the information to transmit it back down the nervous system so that the body can react according to the difficulties as they suddenly appear and then flash past. Reflexes play such an important role that very often a fraction of a second can spell the difference between life and death. But, as in all forms of motorsport, the stop watch is the supreme judge of F1 racing drivers. ■

DATA SHEET

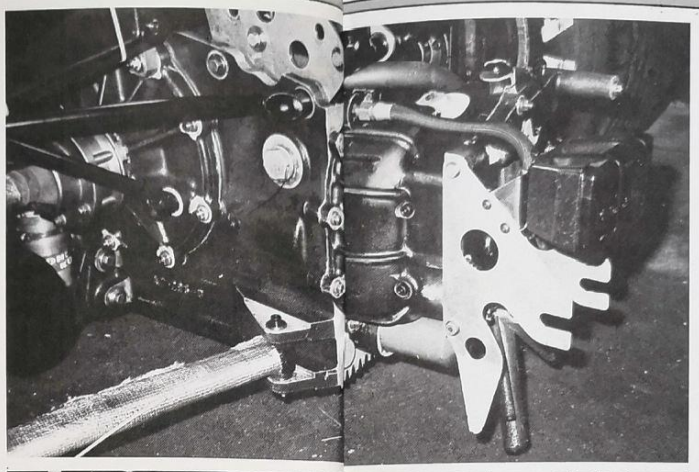
FORMULA 1
ARROWS A7 - BMW F1

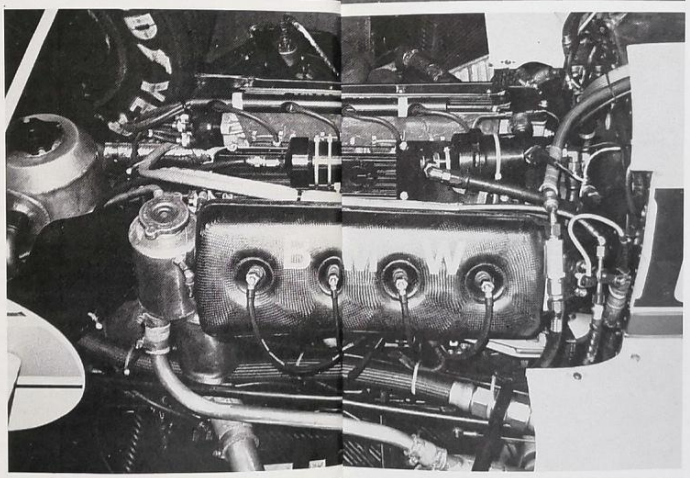
ENGINE

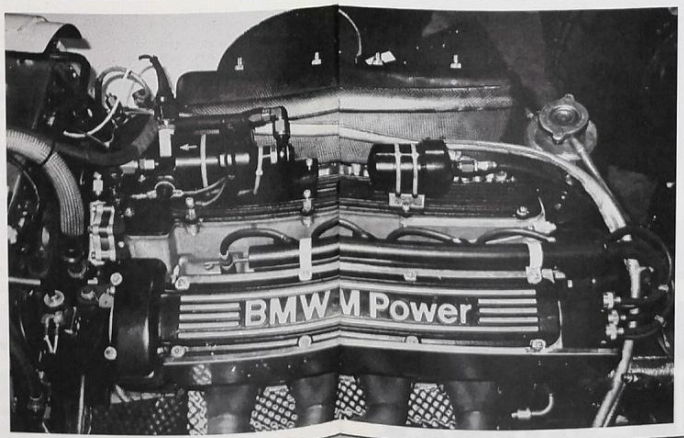
Construction
Location: Central, rear.
Configuration: Longditudinal with vertical cylinders.
Type: BMW M12/13, 4 cylinders in-line, turbocharged.
Cooling system: Water with lateral radiator.
Construction materials
Block and cylinder head: Grey cast iron.
Cylinder head: Aluminium alloy.
Pistons: Mahle — forged aluminium alloy.
Con rods: Forged titanium.
Crankshaft: Forged steel.
Casings, covers and struts: Magnesium and aluminium alloy.
Number of bearings: 5.
Combustion chamber: Hemispheric, cross flow.
Distribution: 2 overhead steel camshafts. 4 valves per cylinder, double coaxial steel springs.
Turbocharging: Single KKK turbocharger with biflux turbine body, aluminium air/air Behr intercooler.
Injection/ignition: Indirect injection — Bosch HKZ plunger type — digital electronic fuel flow controls. Bosch breakerless electronic system. Injectors in each of trumpet inlets. 1 spark plug per cylinder, placed centrally and vertically in combustion chamber. Ignition distributor fixed directly to the end of the exhaust cam shaft and driven by the same camshaft.
Exhaust: 4 special V2A outlets connected in pairs to the turbo inlet according to firing order (1 - 4, 2 - 3). Driver-adjustable wastegate. Large manifold to the rear, passing between suspension elements, under the left transmission differential shaft.
Lubrification: Dry sump with oil radiator. 1 pressure and 4 scavenger pumps.

SPECIFICATION

Engine size: 1499cc.
Bore and stroke: 89.2 x 60.0.
Swept volume per cylinder: 374.9cc.
Compression ratio: 7.5:1.
Angle between valves: 40°.
Diam. of valves: Inlet: 35.8 mm. **Outlet:** 30.2 mm. **Valve lift:** 10.8 mm.
Weight per piston: 365 grams.
Length of con rods: 153.6 mm (between axes).
Diam. of crankshaft:
Main bearings: 55 mm. **Con rod journals:** 48 mm.
Firing order: 1 - 3 - 4 - 2.
Boost pressure for race: 2.1 bars.
Maximum bhp (race): Approx. 720 (530 kW) at 10500 rpm.
Torque (race): 52 mKilos (150 N.m) at 8500 rpm.
Maximum rpm: 11200.
Specific power: 480 bhp/1 (353 KW/l).
Linear piston speed at maximum rpm: 21m/sec at 10500 rpm.
Laden weight: 165-160 kilos/363-374lbs (with clutch, accessories, turbo and air cooler).







The gearbox features Hewland internals inside the Arrows casing.

Tails — the four exhaust outlets.

Heads — the BMW engine intake manifold with the injectors.

TRANSMISSION

Type: To rear wheels.
Gearbox: 6-speed Arrows/Hewland. Magnesium alloy casing. Dry sump-type lubrification (under gearbox), with mechanical pump and small exterior radiator on right side.
Rapid interchangeable gear ratios. Hewland pinions (straight cut).
Differential: Hewland limited slip.
Clutch: Hydraulic Borg and Beck clutch, twin dry discs.
Gear ratios (on Donington Circuit):

	No of teeth	Speed at 10000 rpm (kph/mph)
1st:	13/35	125/78.1
2nd:	15/33	153/95.6
3rd:	16/31	174/108.7
4th:	18/29	209/130.6
5th:	20/28	241/150.6
6th:	21/27	262/163.7

Final drive ratio: 9/35.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES

Dashboard instruments: Contactless rev counter (12000 rpm), boost pressure gauge, double switch operated digital temperature gauge (water and oil temperatures) at engine outlet or radiator outlet, oil and air inlet temperatures. Warning lights: oil (left dashboard side) and fuel pressure.
Switches: Ignition on left dashboard side, fire extinguisher, electric fuel pump and rear light on right dashboard side.
To driver's right: Boost pressure knob, gear shift lever.
Non removable Momo steering wheel.
6-point Willans safety harness.
'Life-support' extinguisher.
Seat moulded to fit driver.
Air starter motor system.
Fuel tank: Central (incorporated in shell, aluminium sides).
Turbocharging intercooler system: Inclined, placed on left side (aluminium Behr).
Water radiator: Inclined, placed on right side (aluminium Behr).
Extra engine oil radiator: Placed on right side.
Small transmission oil radiator: On right side of gearbox.

CHASSIS

No: A7-3.
Type: Monocoque with aluminium honeycomb panel, composite carbon fibre interior reinforcements. Fuel tank incorporated in monocoque cockpit, behind the driver. Roll over bar. Engine held by two cast magnesium tubular steel support frames which link the rear shell to the engine/transmission spacer. Machined aluminium rear suspension cross beam.
Bodywork: Kevlar composite reinforced with carbon. Flat bottom car and flat lateral side pods. Engine cover and fairing above the transmission. Small plexiglass wind deflector and two lateral streamlined rear view mirrors. 2 adjustable front wings. Rear wing on pylon with two adjustable flaps, lateral appendages and stiffeners. Constructed by Rolston Auto Technic.
Designed by Arrows
Suspension: Front and Rear — Rising rate push rod type, upper and lower wishbone inboard spring operated by push rod connected to lower wishbone. Fabricated upright. Timkin bearing.
Steering: Arrows rack and pinion mounted forward of the front suspension.
Brakes: 4 ventilated steel discs inside the wheels. Single piston light alloy calipers. Front air scoops. Hydraulically operated separate rear/front circuits. Brake balance knob (not adjustable by driver).

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase: 2.75 cm.
Front track: 1.80 cm.
Rear track: 1.65 cm.
Overall length: 4.60 cm.
Width: 2.15 cm.
Height: 1.05 cm.

CAPACITIES

Fuel tank: 220 litres.
Engine oil: Approx. 7 litres.
Water: Approx. 11 litres.
Wheels: Monobloc magnesium alloy Dymag rims. Held in place with central bolt and safety pin.
Tyres: Radial Goodyears.
Dimensions: Front — 25.0 x 9.0 — 13. Rear: 26.0 x 15.0 — 13.
Laden weight (without fuel): 565 kilos/1,243lbs (minimum weight allowance - 540 kilos).
Front/rear weight distribution: Approx. 40 - 60 %.
Power to weight ratio (unladen state): 0.78 kilos/bhp (1.07 kilos/kW).

CONSTRUCTOR

Arrows Racing Team Ltd.
Unit 39.
Barton Road.
Walter Eaton Industrial Estate.
Bletchley.
Milton Keynes.
Buckinghamshire.
Tel: (0908) 70047
Directors: Jackie Oliver, Alan Rees.
Engineer: Dave Wass.
1984 sponsors: Barclay (cigarettes), Würth (tools), Louis de Poortere (carpets), Nordica (ski boots).
Industrial backers: Goodyear, Champion, Valvoline.

THE MEN, THE IDEAS AND THE MONEY BEHIND IMSA

IN FOCUS

WHILE EUROPE IS BUSY DEALING WITH ITS IMBROGLIOS WHICH HAVE LITTLE TO DO WITH MOTOR RACING, MOTORSPORT IN THE UNITED STATES, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS CONSTANTLY MATURING AND ADVANCING. GPI MADE THE JOURNEY OVER TO FIND OUT WHAT MAKES IMSA SO SUCCESSFUL AND SPOKE TO RALPH SANCHEZ THE MIAMI GRAND PRIX PROMOTER, BRUCE LEVEN A COMPETITOR AND IMSA ORGANISER JOHN BISHOP.

by Jean-Marc Teissedre

RALPH SANCHEZ — STRAIGHT FROM CUBA TO MIAMI

He could easily be mistaken for a presidential body guard with his dark glasses, blazer and flannel trousers, holding a walky talky as he strides down the street. He could have had an easy relaxed life in Florida thanks to his comfortable financial situation and his perfect command of both English and Spanish, not to mention that he corresponds to a lot of women's image of the ideal man. But rather than pursue a financially rewarding career as a real estate promoter he chose the harder task of promoting the Miami GP. His name is Ralph Sanchez. A born leader of men who has managed to mix business with pleasure.

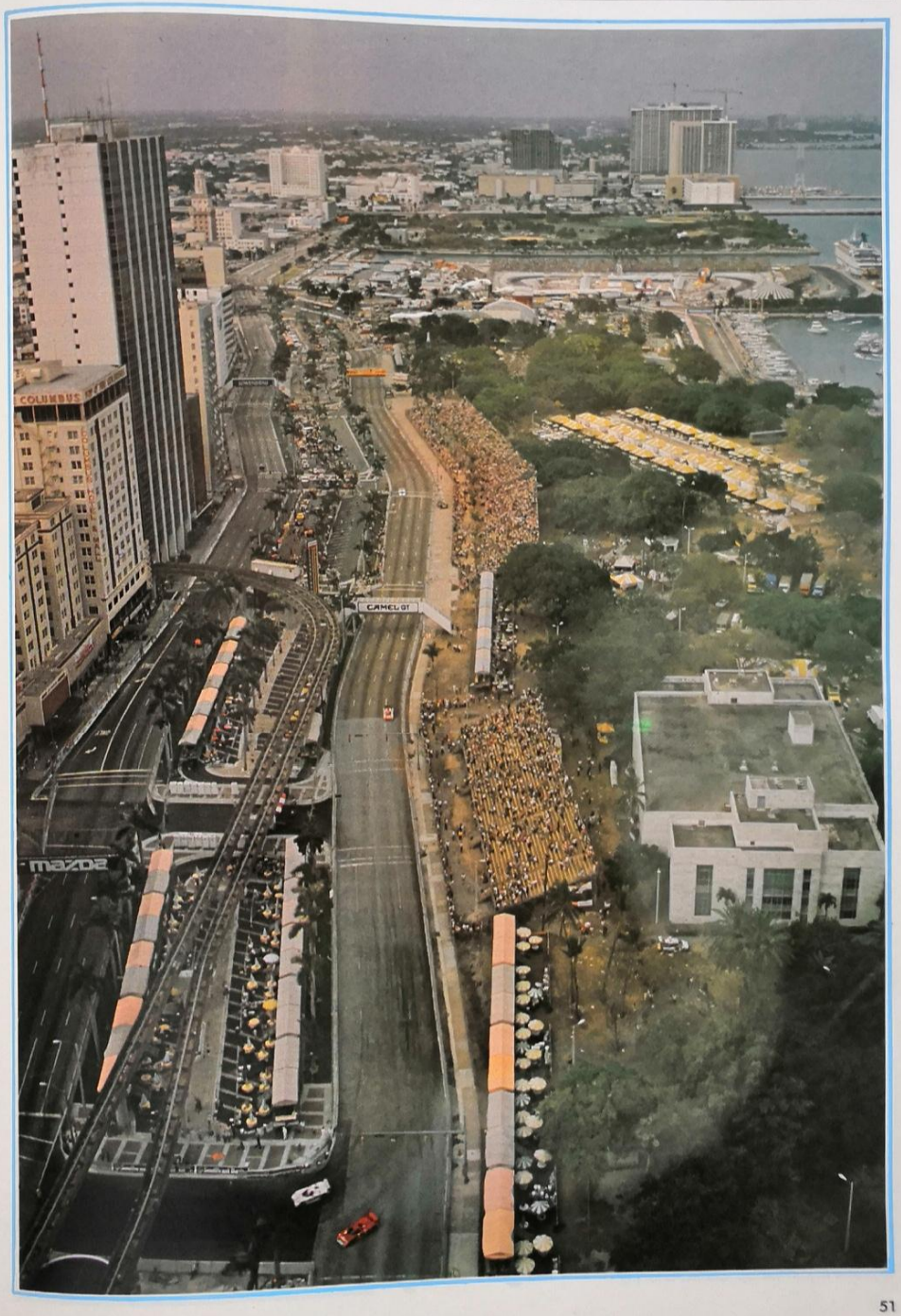
'Business' in the States means just that — business, even if sport is involved. The Miami GP was hoisted up through the ranks of motor racing to become one of the most important US events in no time at all. Success came with the laying out of vast sums of money. Without counting the promotional work, the third edition of the Miami GP cost a total of $3 million!

Eight hundred people are hired on for three days during the race along with a permanent staff of twenty who work for Miami Motorsports Inc., founded in 1982 to deal with the organising of the event itself. The structure of the company is a very simple affair. *"I'm the chairman, Bruce Cazja (ex-IMSA) is the general manager and there is a person in charge of each of the various departments, aided by an assistant if necessary. And that's it!"* Ralph Sanchez proudly explained. The company is ably run and some departments, like the sales or marketing departments are definitely worth looking into more closely. The main reason behind Miami's rise to the heights of fame is naturally the substantial prize money. Pole position man finds himself $25,000 richer and the race winner gets twice that. Total prize money amounts to some $250,000! Who wouldn't be lured to IMSA with that kind of cash just waiting to be lapped up (!). The backing required to finance all the prize money and investments has to be found. *"Most of our takings, in fact, come from the gate money. Admission is reasonably priced so that most of the population feels concerned. What's the point of naming a car 'Spirit of Miami' if the inhabitants can't watch the show?"* Entrance to the circuit for a grand stand seat costs $20, which to Europeans may seem expensive until you realise that a steak costs $12 in any local restaurant. Out of the 120,000 spectators over the weekend many did not take the cheapest tickets. A fair number are prepared to pay from $35 - $55 for a place in the covered stands which has a total seating capacity of 36,000. A visit to the paddock will cost you an extra $15. Obviously the gate money alone is not enough. The difference is found by Ralph Sanchez and his team who 'sell the event'. They have an interesting policy. *"We want an entirely different type of race and we invite the kinds of companies that bring in Monaco-style spectators rather than the Indianapolis sort."* Which is why if you stroll through the paddock on Sunday morning you're bound to catch glimpses of Dallas-type girls and men in smart well-tailored suits. These 'top of the range' spectators have to be carefully catered for and several marquees are hired from sponsors independent of motor racing and erected along the track-side. Depending on the size of the marquee, the view and so on, $3,000, $5,000, $7,000 or $9,000 is enough to allow ten to twenty top brass spectators watch the race from there. They also receive a programme, a poster, a tee-shirt, and a TV is made available so that they can follow the race all the way round the track. As 90 small and 34 large marquees were hired for the occasion, there was enough money in the kitty for the prize money. Each sponsor could only invite a further ten guests at $100 per person! Traditional advertising also brings in the money. Everything or almost, goes. Advertising space in the programmes, radio or TV commercials, posters on the concrete walls lining the circuit. You choose and your ad is placed there, where you want it. It goes without saying that all organisers look to the mass media in their promotional work. The private TV station SIN (broadcasts in Spanish) spent the equivalent of $180,000 in commercials for the exclusive retransmission rights, ie, to sell the programmes. Twenty countries watched live coverage of the race and 85 countries after the race had actually been run. Löwenbrau, the beer people, stuck up their posters for $350,000 and contributed even more money to the organisers' kitty in order that the official race name become the Löwenbrau Miami Grand Prix. Ralph Sanchez is concerned about his figures and quite rightly too since in 1983 he lost $1.3 million of his own money. Most people would have thought that that was the end — but not Ralph. He went to see his bankers and convinced them to continue their support. *"In life you either win or lose. Sometimes it rains. I assume the responsibility of winning or losing but I can't do anything about the weather. Anyway, the long and the short of it is that the bank agreed to help me and haven't regretted doing so. Since 1984 I've been regularly sending their money right back to them. I hope that after this year, all those bad memories will be a thing of the past."*

Ralph Sanchez is polite and tactful and is the sort of person who can talk himself out of any situation. He was involved in a delicate problem when Fittipaldi was black-flagged. The Brazilian's March had been entered by Sanchez who, of course, was race promotor. He managed to calm the twice world champion and, by prize giving, the affair had been forgotten.

But, why does Sanchez both promote the GP and enter a car? *"Because I'm crazy, I guess! You also have to remember that over here the American public isn't familiar with motor racing and the various categories. In Europe everyone knows that you can't race single seaters at Le Mans for example. Here at Miami it's different. My idea behind linking the car's name to the town was to get folks to take a keener interest in what was going on, in who the drivers were and actually follow the race. This ploy was particularly successful in 1984 when the crowds cheered Fittipladi as he worked his way up. We don't have plans, however, to take part in the entire series."* It is rumoured that the 'Spirit of Miami' will be at this year's edition of the Le Man's 24 Hours. *"True, I've always wanted to go over to Le Mans and at present I'm working on a project to organise some kind of tie between the French race and the Miami GP."* Similar to the Daytona-Le Mans trophy? *"No way! It's got to be something original — something like inviting the winning team of the French event over here and vice versa."* Ralph Sanchez appears to have unlimited ideas and ambitions. Do they include the doing away with of Sebring and even Daytona? *"No, of course not. And why should I? I'm on very good terms with Bill France and I hope that they will last. Speedway followers are a great deal more knowledgeable than our spectators but Miami has more prestige amongst the journalists, VIPs and the general public, just because the race takes place at Miami. The Daytona 24 Hours just doesn't have the same general public impact. We've a second race down on the calendar due to be held on November 10th when a CART round is planned. You won't see the CART single seaters going to Daytona, though, in the same way that NASCAR won't be coming down here."* Ralph Sanchez is busy building a permanent circuit for the Super Vee and Trans-Am formulae. *"Whatever happens, the IMSA race will continue on the street circuit —that's part of its success. In this part of the States there's a high percentage of South Americans and they are much keener on motorsport than the North Americans. It's the Latin blood! These are the people I'm aiming at — I want them to come to the races. In California, for example, there are lots of circuits there and they're all thriving."*

The Miami GP promoter's life revolves so much around racing that his old job in an estate agency seems a thing of the distant past. Ralph Sanchez has made a



flourishing business of his passion in life. The town of Miami provides the police force, fire brigade and various public services required for an event like the Miami GP. Europe could do well to follow the example. Over here everyone wants to eat the cake but no-one wants to help bake it. It's a shame because there are definitely a few Ralph Sanchezes over here. Meanwhile, after his third Miami GP, which fulfilled all expectations, Sanchez has gone to the Bahamas for a week to rest. When he gets back it'll be time to start thinking about the Le Mans 24 Hours and 1986.

BRUCE LEVEN — FROM TRASH CANS TO THE 962

One of the keys to the success of the IMSA championship is that rich privateers enter cars and very often get behind the wheel too. No-one can miss noticing Bruce Leven as he ambles around the paddock in his pink and blue flowered shirt and matching bermudas, a huge grin spread from ear to ear on his way to pay his friends and rivals a quick visit. People like Bob Akin, the Leon brothers or the reigning title holder Randy Lanier. Bruce, too, is there for the fun of it. That doesn't mean to say that he doesn't take his racing seriously. The will to win's there all right. Make no mistake. But he's not the kind to shut himself away in a luxurious motorhome. Aged 46 and father of three children, Bruce Leven knows he's no match for the likes of John Paul Junior or Bobby Rahal.

He had his hey day at Sebring on March 21, 1981 when he teamed up with Haywood and Hurley to take victory. Bruce began racing in 1978 at the wheel of a Porsche Carrera and has put in a good string of results rather than scoring outright wins. His allegiance to the German manufacturer (924, 934, 935 and now the 962) has remained true despite a brief fling with Lola (a T600 fitted with a 935 engine). His policy for 1985 — *"The team won't be competing in the entire championship so that we can prepare ourselves better for those races we're entering."* Unfortunately, Leven doesn't even have a regular team. He takes on his drivers just before each race. He has also signed a contract to shod his 962 with Bridgestone rubber which doesn't seem a particularly wise choice in the circumstances. Bruce explains. *"I can't offer a drive to fight for the GTP title and the better drivers rightly prefer to join the top teams. As for my Bridgestone deal, it was an offer that I couldn't refuse."* From the outside it might seem rather paradoxical. The team looks rich enough — more than most other IMSA competitors, in fact. *"Costs have gone up so much this year that now we're calculating in terms of $4 to $500,000 to cover the twelve races on our schedule. On top of that you have to add the purchase of a 962. Perhaps now you can understand why I made the deal with Bridgestone."*

Money counts enormously in Leven's life. He started out at the wheel of a waste disposal truck twenty years ago and today he has a workforce of two hundred working within twelve different companies in the States of Montana, Idaho and Washington. Leven's most profitable sector is in the town of Seattle where he dominates the field of refuse. Judging by his lifestyle, it's a lucrative line of business. When the Boutsen/Pescarolo 962 retired during the Daytona 24 Hours, Leven left the circuit before the race ended and flew off in his private Cessna Ciceron jet plane into the night. He left his mechanics to pack up the material into the huge red and blue striped articulated truck, the interior of which is fitted out from top to bottom in varnished wood panels. The vehicle cost $170,000. Despite all his riches, Bruce won't be making the trip over to Le Mans. *"I haven't got the cash,"* he says seriously — which perhaps explains why he sold one of his 962s between Daytona and Miami. That should keep him going for a while.

For no particular reason at all, French-speaking drivers have been at the wheel of Bruce Leven's cars since the beginning of the season.

Claude Ballot Lena says, *"The reason why I drive for Bruce is a little special in that I've known his chief mechanic for ten years since Walter Brun (a Swiss German) was with Claude Haldi when I was taking part in the European GT championship. I know I can trust him. As for Bruce Leven himself, I think he's great. He's always laughing and joking and you don't have the stress and strain often experienced on European teams."*

Henri Pescarolo adds, *"He's got a great team together — during the Daytona 24 Hours the drivers could choose between two different menus! Seriously, though, they've reached quite a competitive level in IMSA but they would be a little less at ease in WEC rounds. Perhaps with time, especially with all that cash at hand. There's a terrific atmosphere within the team. The States is the only place where you come across such relaxed people."*

JOHN BISHOP — A PRIVATE HUNTING GROUND!

One person you can't fail to meet in any IMSA paddock is the great master of ceremonies, the great IMSA co-ordinator himself, Mr John Bishop. He is the man who actually created and popularised this form of racing in the States. He, too, is a friendly and helpful character and 1985 has got off to a good start for him.

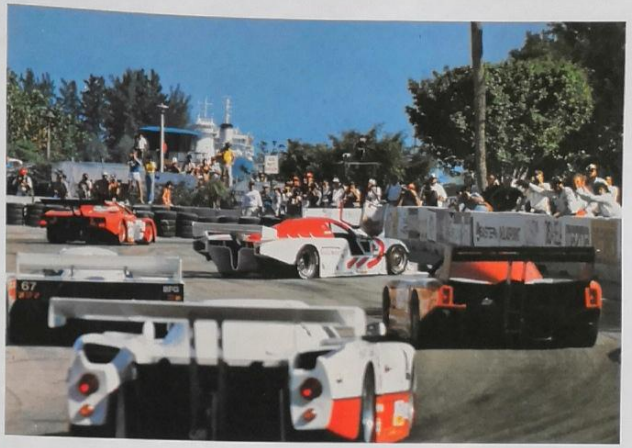
"1984 was an exceptional year for us. Attendance figures rose by 28 %. We sold more tickets at all the races, except at Lime Rock, which makes an average of 30,000 admission tickets per race with as many as 85,000 at Charlotte and 70,000 at Miami." Better promotional work? *"Perhaps, but we don't do anything special. Promotion of the events is ensured by Camel, who back the entire series, industrial backers, such as Bilstein, Goodyear, and by outside sponsors such as Eastern Airlines. Sun Bank paid for two commercials lasting 30 seconds and 1 minute at the Daytona 24 Hours. We negotiate contracts ourselves for the entire season. For example WTBS will be transmitting all the races by satellite to those TV stations wishing to broadcast them. My job is to sign the cheque, that's all."*

Talking about money is never much of a problem in the States. John Bishop is not, however, keen to let on just what the situation at IMSA is, *"Briefly, we made more profits in 1984 than ever before. We don't believe in organising races to lose money. We have five main share holders — NASCAR owns 25% of the capital. We do our accounts at the end of each financial year. 1984 was a good year."* Bishop has seventeen people working full-time for him and twenty five more are on hand to help out at each of the races. *"The track marshals are all volunteers from the local clubs. At Daytona we have the support of the Speedway staff."*

The Seattle dustbin men stick either one of these two little drawings of the boss onto their trucks just after each race depending on whether it was a good or a bad day!

It seems that everything is just as it should be. Some competitors, like Moretti for example, have complained about the increasing costs for a whole season. $1 million is an average budget figure for an average team. Not within anyone's limits but one of IMSA's strong points is to have a regular field of 70 to 80 cars. Does Bishop think that people will be put off by the high budget? *"No, I don't think they will. OK, ten years ago, $200,000 would have been enough but today there are far more good teams, more entries and more constructors ready and willing to accept the challenge and more and more organisers are begging us to go and race on their circuits. The only thing that could put a stop to IMSA would be an economic crisis, like in 1929, but then we wouldn't be the only sector affected. You mustn't forget that there are six different categories to choose from. GTP may seem too expensive for some but there's still GTU or GTO where the race winner gets $15,000 and the championship winner $30,000. And then there's also the Renault Cup, the Champion Spark Plug Challenge, the Camel Light and Firestone Endurance Series to choose from. If a driver really wants to compete there's always a class for him. FISA doesn't offer as much to its members and just how much do you think it would cost to take on the official Porsche or Lancia teams? The people who complain most are often those with luxury motorhomes and jet planes. Only five years ago we were lucky to see five articulated trucks in the paddock. Now there are at least twenty at each race."*

The fruit of success which contrasts sharply to Group C's problems *"Once our rules and regulations have been established they stay unchanged for quite a while. We still stick to the 1976 GTP rules which were elaborated in conjuction with the ACO just at the time when FISA lost complete control over Group 5. At first the silhouette class seemed like a good idea. But since 1978 Porsche have got carried away with the whole thing and now it doesn't really mean much at all. FISA didn't react and Group 5 prices increased so much that we thought, why not create another class for real race cars which would work out a great deal cheaper than these production-derived cars. That's why the Lola T600 cost $100,000 whilst a twin turbo Porsche 935 cost $240,000. At that point in time, however, there was still convergence with FISA. The beginning of the end came the day we had to decide how to limit bhp to about 650. We put forward a weight/engine size chart but Europe was more interested in fuel consumption figures for political reasons. The Americans like their motorsport to be 'heroic'. They want to see epic races like the Daytona 500 Miles, Indianapolis or the Le Mans 24 Hours as it used to be. There's nothing heroic about fighting against the fuel pump, worrying about the throttle pedal or obeying the team manager's or even the computer's instructions, is there? A 956 just doesn't rouse the crowds for all its sophisticated technology. There's a certain amount of fuel to be burnt and the car has to be driven accordingly. I'll even go as far as to say that World Championship rounds are anti-promotional. It's not the least bit surprising that the spectators are bored with them. Here the exact opposite is true and that's why new competitors are being attracted. Audi-USA and BMW both have GTP projects for 1986 and they'll be joining Jaguar, Ford, Lola, March, Argo, Royale, General Motors and Buick. Over there in Europe they're just praying that Lancia won't drop out. FISA seems to think it's the United Nations, with the difference that, although the UN is based in New York, it doesn't establish American law all over the world. I think there's more to it than just a technical rule problem. There don't seem to be any new ideas emerging. IMSA introduced, but did not create, the idea of street races especially for those kinds of cars with the Miami Grand Prix. But I don't think there'll be any on the World Championship calendar for a long while yet although it's something that brings the crowds in and the mass media. So why do they say no and what's the point of waiting? Another thing I can't understand for the life of me is how thay can have a GP and the Le Mans 24 Hours on the same day. Do you know, every year we telex the ACO for them to inform us as early as possible as to the date of their event so that our dates don't clash. Apparently in Europe, things just don't work that way. We're probably less civilised than you are and that's why we do things more simply and more directly."*



Despite appearances, John Bishop is very careful about IMSA-FISA relations. He's not entirely happy with the German group Porsche. *"That's not quite true. Porsche have contributed a great deal to IMSA. Not only that, the 962s are exactly identical to the March-Buicks concerning their fundamental principles. I don't see what I could do to stop their march forward without jeopardising the March-Buicks at the same time. What we have to avoid is the absolute domination of a single car which has the spectators losing interest. It's a difficult situation to be in whether we're dealing with works teams or privateers."* But surely, won't the arrival of Buick and the presence of Ford on the scene modify IMSA's philosophy? *"We can't let our organisation lose its credibility by becoming unstable. As I've already said, we believe in sticking to our rules and regulations. Constructors rarely stay for great lengths of time in one particular sector. There will always be room in IMSA for the private teams — without them, IMSA wouldn't exist. If a constructor decides to compete, that's a point in our favour — nothing more. I'm actually pleased to see a works team entry from time to time, especially as Porsche is in the World Championship."*

Everything appears to be running like clockwork. But the fight's not over yet as Porsche, winners of the first two rounds, know only too well. ■

FOYT/WOLLEK/ PORSCHE

THE WINING COMBINATION

AJ FOYT AND BOB WOLLEK SCORED THEIR SECOND WIN OF THE SEASON AT THE THIRD IMSA ROUND STAGED AT SEBRING. THE DAYTONA WINNERS OF ONLY TWO MONTHS AGO GUIDED THEIR PRESTON HENN 962 TO GIVE THE BAVARIAN CONSTRUCTOR AND EVEN MORE CONVINCING CHAMPIONSHIP LEAD.

by Jean-Marc Teissedre

For the second time this year, Preston Henn's 962 finished ahead of Bell/Holbert's Porsche and one of the two Goodriches. This round of the IMSA championship, however, differed from the Daytona round held in January, but before we go into the details, allow me to set the scene.

Sebring could be mistaken for any one of the many small towns in central Florida. Its contrasting feature is the aerodrome which becomes an automobile circuit once a year at the end of March, when a 12-hour endurance race is staged. The start is given at 11am. Twenty years ago, it was a sacred place in the world of international motorsport. Today, Sebring is struggling to regain that recognition. Even the IMSA round fails to attract the same healthy field it once used to and the better teams had given the Sebring round a miss.

There were no important changes on the cars of the pace-setting teams except that BF Goodrich had a 1984 John Fitzpatrick 962 in replacement of his car wrecked at Daytona. The car sporting No 67 sported a short tail whilst the team's other car had a long tail. Similarly to Bell/Holbert's Porsche, the two cars were fitted with Andial-prepared 3.2-litre engines whereas Preston Henn and Bob Akin only had 2.8-litre blocks. No Motronic devices were featured on any of the cars. The March contingent had three different power units. There was a Buick turbo for John Paul who teamed up with Ken Madren and Wayne Pickering in their 84 G, just for the event. Title holder Randy Lanier and John Kalagian both had classic Chevrolet V8s and the Leon brothers were at the wheel of a 3.2-litre Porsche which they had assembled into their new 85 G for the occasion. As for the Argo clan, there were two Mazdas and a normally-aspirated Buick amongst the touts' favourites for the Light class. There was a large number of Firebirds, Corvettes (of all ages), 934s, 911s and RX 7s, to make up the rest of the field and two Ferrari 512 BBs and a Triumph TR 8 had also come to swell the numbers.

Practice had originally been planned for Thursday and Friday but were cut short when storms raged during practically the whole of the first day. Very few competitors ventured out on to the water-logged circuit, the fastest time went to a Mazda. Little more than an hour was all the time the competitors had to seize pole position the following day. With prize money less generous than at Miami and less TV coverage than at Daytona, competition wasn't as fierce as might have been expected. Bob Akin's team was the only one to put in some competitive lap times. The 962 sporting No 5 was backed by Coca Cola who were also backing the event. Hans Stuck went out to run some quick times and forgot the turbo boost spanner in the pits and raced round to stop the clocks at a very fast 2m 12.975s! A good 6 seconds faster than Redman's 1984 time which he established in the Jaguar. In the light of such a tough competitor, many teams gave up the fight for pole, like Mass, who hadn't been given enough time to try or even

Wollek, whose car had broken down opposite the pits and there was nothing he could do.

The five fastest qualifying times were all higher than last year's pole winning time. Two 962s headed the grid, followed by a Jaguar, a March-Chevrolet and the March-Buick, driven by John Paul, who at the same time realised just how much progress Robin Herd's team have made over the past twelve months. Downing and Maffucci couldn't draw any comparisons from last year's cars because the Light class only came into being this year. Their time of 2m 36.28s placed them in an honourable 18th position in the midst of a flock of 935s. In GTO (GTs over 3 litres) Walt Bohren driving a Firebird won the estime of all the Corvette owners, as the next fastest Firebird, (Heinz/Thomson/Trueman) conceded 2 seconds.

Because of the heavy rains, the night practice session was put off until Friday, 7pm. Preston Henn's 962 did not take part. Car No 8 was out of the running due to faulty ignition. Wollek and "Super Tex" switched over to the winning 935 at Daytona in 1983. It would remain to be seen which car they'd decide to use for the race itself. The 962 had only been round the circuit a dozen times.

As early as Friday, Sebring aerodrome was brimming over with spectators and by race day, there were a good 60,000 making themselves comfy; the best viewpoint being from the roof of their motorhomes.

At 10.30am sharp, the cars were taking up their grid positions for a "Le Mans"-type start. Thirty minutes later the Sebring 12 Hours got off to a perfect start. Stuck wasn't as quick to get away as John Paul who zipped off to take an early command of the race. As fate would have it, his car was sporting the colours of Royal Crown, a soft drink brand and direct rival of Coca Cola! Al Holbert lost a wheel on Turn 5 on the opening lap and limped back to the pits. Unfortunately, as he was on his way, a competitor, not expecting to find such a slow-moving 962 on his line, was caught unawares and clanged hard into car No 14's rear. The impact sent Holbert headlong into one of the very few concrete walls lining the track. The 962's front cover buckled, a brake disc and the lower fairing were also damaged in the incident. Al finally made it back to the pits where repairs were quickly carried out and he went out to rejoin the race. Not for long, though. A lap later he was back in the pits to make some adjustments with the leaders already on their 12th lap. Bell/Holbert/Unser Jr took up the challenge — the 11.5 Hours of Sebring! Hans Stuck, by then, had taken over the lead from John Paul Jr. He had a comfortable cushion on Jochen Mass and the March who in turn was well ahead of the two Jaguars.

Carson Baird surprised everyone by his charge up the field and was lying a plucky 6th at the wheel of his Corvette GTP. After no more than 45 minutes, though, the strikingly-liveried Anglo/American effort with a Lola chassis was in the pits having its snapped rear suspension seen to. Meanwhile, the future winning car of the event was motoring along fast in 11th position, in front of the Argo Buick and de Narvaez's venerable 935, the 1984 victor with which Reinhold Joest had every intention of repeating last year's performance.

In IMSA, the drivers are more often than not, unequally matched and usually it means waiting until the first round of fuel stops are over and the second driver well into his stint, before any worthy conclusions can be drawn. This year was

Another country, another way of life

Your humble servant was more surprised than ever to find that IMSA members had been given even more freedom for the Sebring 12 Hours this year. Judge for yourself:

— 26 cars were allowed to start the race without even putting in a single qualifying lap!

— Some drivers had the good idea of by-passing some of the tyre walls separating the circuit from the aerodrome with the result that their laps times were 'satisfactory' and overtaking during the race was also made easier. Mass was given a 10s penalty when he 'forgot' Turn 2 on lap 4. Chip Robinson pushed his luck a little too far when he braved his way round Dieter Quester's Porsche and crashed into the tyre wall. The car was lying 2nd at the time.

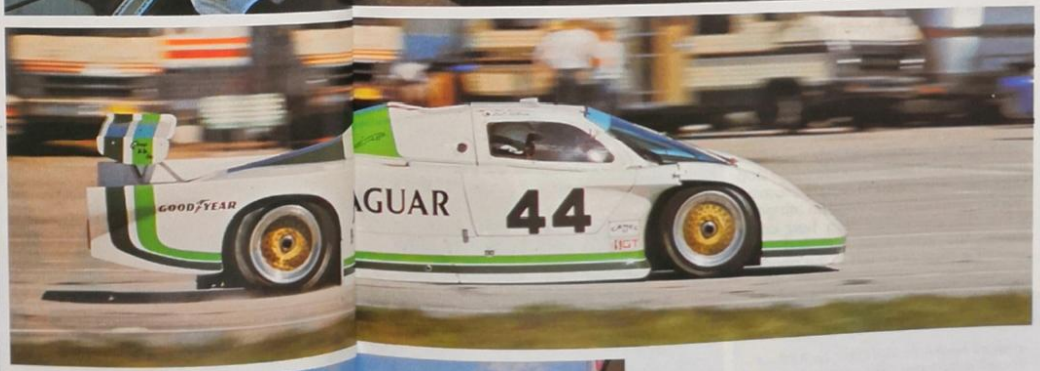
— Rick Knoop walked back to his pits after leaving his car out on the track where it had run out of fuel. Peter Halmser decided to go to Turn 11 with a full jerrycan where the Porsche No 68 was patiently waiting. The car went on to finish 3rd.

— Those drivers whose cars broke down at the beginning of the straight behind the pits carried out repair work in the public parking lot and managed as best as they could with the spectators swarming around taking photos of the wife and kids in front of a real racing car!

— As for the cars that broke down elsewhere out on the track, the mechanics didn't have much difficulty finding a hole to crawl through in the catch fencing and save their respective drivers from their predicaments. The result was that people were continually scurrying back and forth across the track. One guy was even seen pushing a wheel for the Argo Buick No 1 which had lost its rear right wheel at Turn 3 at about 17:30.

— The driver of the Ferrari No 51 was getting impatient waiting for his mechanics to arrive. He jumped aboard the photographers' shuttle service van to get back to the pits. Later on, the Ferrari 512 BB was back out on the track as if nothing had happened — only to retire after a few laps.

— Don Whittington who "*happened to be passing*" accepted Preston Henn's offer to get behind the wheel of the 937, No 7, during the third hour of racing. He wasn't present during qualifying.



Mass ran over a lump of cement which tore open the floorboard on his Goodrich 962 sporting No 67 (top).

The Jaguars haven't been lucky this season. Tullius pulled out of the race with a valve train problem clearly visible in photo to rear left on his Group 44 (above).

Early leaders Akin and Stuck were forced to withdraw when a tyre blew damaging the rear suspension (bottom).

STARTING GRID

No 5. Akin/Stuck/Mullen Porsche 962 2m12.975s	No 14. Bell/Holbert Porsche 962 2m16.310
No 44. Tullius/Robinson/Adams Jaguar XJR 5 2m17.105s	No 1. Lanier/Whittington March 84 G-Chevrolet 2m17.425s
No 3. Madren/Pickering/Paul March 84 G-Buick turbo 2m17.675s	No 67. Mass/Busby/Morton Porsche 962 2m19.425
No 04. Redman/Haywood Jaguar XJR 5 2m19.473	No 15. Kalagian/Lloyd/Grunnah March 84 G-Chevrolet 2m20.305s
No 4. Labonte/Price/Baird/Hagan Corvette GTP 2m22.080s	No 2. Leon/Leon/Mac Kitterick March 85 G-Porsche 2m23.148s
No 01. Bell/Brockman/Rigins Argo Buick 2m24.051s	No 68. Halsmer/Knoop/Quester Porsche 962 2m24.789s
No 8. Wollek/Foyt Porsche 962 2m27.472s	No 7. Wollek/Foyt/Henn Porsche 935 2m28.444s
No 12. Thoelke/Jelinski/Schwarz Gebhardt Ford 2m33.310s	No 43. De Narvaez/Miller/Kemper Porsche 935/2 2m33.820s
No 16. Hinze/Minter/Yarosh Porsche 935 K3 2m35.494s	No 63. Downing/Maffucci Argo-Mazda 2m36.281s
No 47. Dingman/Bohren/Millen Pontiac Firebird 2m36.816s	No 26. Frank/White/Kendall Porsche 935 2m38.860s
No 55. Heinz/Trueman/Thompson Chevrolet Corvette 2m38.927s	No 20. Silver/Herman/Baker Porsche 935 2m39.010s
No 93. Marsh/Powley/Marsh Argo Mazda 2m40.547s	No 21. Gelles/Cohen/Walker Ferrari 512 BB 2m41.480s
No 95. Van Evry/Tisdelle/Refening Porsche 935 2m41.849s	No 79. Winters/Bergstrom/EF Robi Porsche 924 Carrera 2m42.056s
No 76. Baldwin/Kline/Young Mazda RX 7 2m43.015s	No 58. Borlase/Hammond/Torres Porsche 934 2m43.597s
No 88. Shafer/Shafer/Malloy Chevrolet Camaro 2m43.782s	No 38. Mandeville/Blackburn Mazda RX 7 2m44.294s
No 89. Jamsal/Fonseca/Mena Porsche 934 2m44.684s	No 53. Smith/Waugh Mazda RX 7 2m45.126s

Took part in the race without putting in any qualifying times: No 29. Brassfield/Brassfield/Luyendick (March 85 G-Chevrolet). No 65. Dallenbach Jr/Jones (Ford Mustang). No 31. Goral/X (Porsche 935). No 00. Kendall/Kendall/Jones (Mazda RX 7). No 35. Case/Panaccione (Porsche 911). No 39. Brezinka/Centano/Hochreuter (Porsche 911).No 34. O'Brien/van Steenburg (OVS Mazda GTP). No 56. Auberlen/Jaukr/Eisnlohr (Porsche 911). No 13. Rubino/Wagone/Knott (Mazda RX 7). No 75. Worth/Gritzalis (Mazda RX 3). No 05. Whitiker/Crosby (Chevrolet Camaro). No 98. Lee/Julian (Buick Skyhawk). No 48. Northam/Cripe/Kruger/Wonder (Porsche 934). No 35. Griffin/Hefner/Speer/Winfre (Porsche 911). No 50 Mac Call/Sheehy/Carter (Chevrolet Camaro). No 92. Prego/Gennone/ Overbagh (Chevrolet Camaro). No 74. Godsey/Gentilozzi/Hill (Porsche 924). No 70. Cummings/Walker/Rubright (Chevrolet Corvette). No 54. Zwiren/Pierney/Peters (Mazda RX 7). No 25. Boyer Roberts/Barben (Chevrolet Camaro). No 08. Olson/Potter/Romano (Mazda RX 7). No66. Haoersin/Habersin/Murray (Chevrolet Camaro).

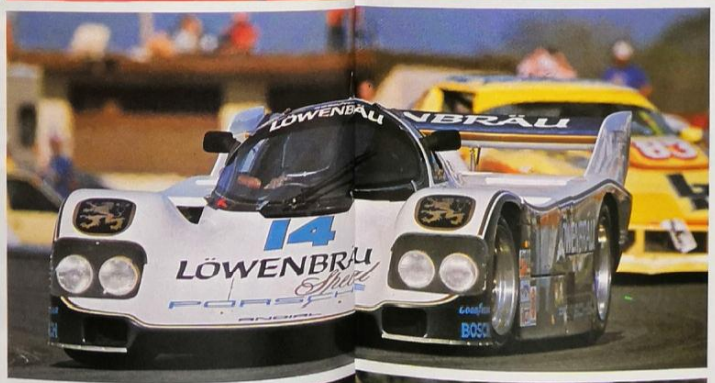
exceptional in that many unforeseen problems cropped up.
At 12.22pm, the March Buick rammed into the Gebhardt, forcing it to retire. A few laps later, it too, withdrew with clutch failure. Only ten minutes later, Redman and his Jaguar coasted to a halt out on the track when the engine bogged down. By 1pm, the second Jag XJR 5 was in trouble when Chip Robinson and Dieter Quester made contact during overtaking. The damage on the 962 No 68 was slight whereas it took the Jag all of thirty minutes to return to the pits minus its front cover and with a broken suspension unit. Porsche were feeling smug when the March Chevrolet of the reigning champions began audibly having transmission problems. Mass/Busby/Morton held sway ahead of Wollek/Foyt and Quester/Knoop/Halmser. This trio could very well have been a winning foursome had Bob Akin's rear right tyre not punctured when he took over from Stuck. The rear suspension was ripped out in the process and the team was obliged to call it a day. Then, it was car No 68's turn to come under the influence of the evil gremlins. The team was lying 3rd when the car started spluttering, announcing there was no more fuel in the tank. In fact there was, but the pump wasn't doing its job. By the time a solution had been found and No 68 was back out on the track, it had been demoted down to 10th position having lost 25 minutes. Sebring's reputation of being hard on the mechanicals was again confirmed. Only the first three cars seemed to by-pass the problems —seemed, because on lap 1, Foyt had felt something in the gearbox go. It was first gear, but the drivers of No 8 had been coping well enough with out. Preston Henn's Porsche was only conceding two laps to Mass/Busby/Morton after three hours of racing. Kalagian/Lloyd/ Grummah's March Chevrolet was in hot pursuit two laps in their wake, but ahead of Bell/Holbert/Unser. In the process of regaining some of the lost ground —seven laps to be exact. Theoretically, if they kept up the pressure, they stood a chance of taking the kudos on the podium! Downing/Maffucci were right behind in their Argo Mazda and Dallenbach Jr/Jones in the Mustang. Tullius's Jaguar was in 11th position, but had to give up any hope of finishing in the points. The race had settled down, but there were more surprises in store.

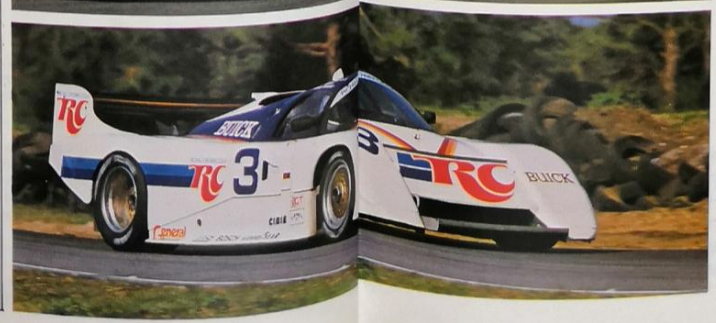
ONE MAN'S JOY IS ANOTHER'S SORROW

Mass/Busby/Morton had emerged as the fastest outfit and lead the pack until 6pm. The spectators had, of course, been keenly following Wollek/Foyt as they slowly began gaining on the forerunners and they had closed in by two laps. They could also tell that the BF Goodrich's position wasn't as stable as it had at first appeared. While they were all busy with their calculators and stop-watches, a voice boomed out over the loud speaker to announce that No 67 had slowed down out on the track. Busby's car looked fine as he pulled up in front of his pits, but once he'd managed to extricate himself from the cockpit with some trouble, the American stood back to let his team members admire the gaping hole in the chassis which had been caused by a block of cement lying in his path which he hadn't seen until the last moment. At 6.25pm, they officially retired. Unlike at Daytona, Bell/Holbert/Unser were this time pursuing Wollek/Foyt. And hauling them in. As luck would have it, Foyt also lost a wheel and in just 25 minutes car No 14 was a mere three laps behind the leaders and by 8.30pm the gap had narrowed by yet another lap. Suddenly, the Bell/Holbert/Unser Porsche appeared to be in difficulty. It wasn't long before this impression was confirmed when an Argo jumped round the No 14 in front of the pits. What was it, the injection? The transmission? Only the driver knew. It wasn't until he made a fuel stop that he announced it was becoming harder and harder to engage 5th gear. After the chequered flag had came down, the mechanics revealed there wasn't a drop of oil left in the gearbox on the 962 Löwenbrau! But, with another 150 minutes of racing left, they continued although they no longer could fight for victory. The only car out of the leading five still in acceptable working order was the Knoop/Halmser/Quester Porsche, but at about 9pm, the Austrian drove into a pile of tyres, putting an end to any hope of the No 68 taking second place from Bell/Holbert/Unser.
The final results of the 33rd edition of the Sebring 12 Hours had remained unchanged from the 10th hour until the end. AJ Foyt can add yet another win to his impressive list which for Sebring alone includes a 2nd place in 1967 and a 3rd in 1984 and Bob Wollek, too, must be pleased with the success and reputation he has forged himself in IMSA-type races. ■

Europe — IMSA end of marriage?

No love is lost between IMSA members and FISA. Preston Henn officially announced his decision not to race at Le Mans giving two reasons. On fuel consumption: "*Our 962s cannot compete on an equal footing with cars prepared according to FISA's rules and regulations. Our cars have too much of a handicap, especially against the 956s.*" Henn's second motive: "*How can anyone expect us to take on the works cars? The difference between the official cars and ours is enormous. There's nothing we can do against them. I don't understand what they're chasing after anyway. We finished 2nd overall in 1984. If all goes according to plan this year, the best we can hope to finish is perhaps 4th. What's the point of spending thousands of dollars for that kind of result? I'd rather go a week earlier to Mid Ohio, as AJ Foyt's found a sponsor for that round and we're in with a chance there.*"
Many Americans agree with Preston Henn's arguments. BF Goodrich, too, will not be going over for the French classic for the same reasons, although the team's managers agree that they are perhaps lacking in experience compared with Dunlop and Michelin. An important point when you want to prove the superiority of the product you're selling. The ACO will definitely have a few Marches, Tullius's Jaguars and the GTP Corvette racing on their circuit. There's not much chance for a healthier American field unless the fuel consumption problem is solved, especially as the IMSA championship is in full swing and highly popular with the mass media.





Pole position at Sebring went to Hans Stuck in this extremely striking Porsche 962 (above).

Bell/Hobert were lucky to finish 2nd.

John Paul Jr, seen here at the wheel of the only March Buick, retired after a mere three laps (bottom).

SEBRING 12 HOURS

Round 3 of International Motor Sport Association (IMSA) 1985.
Date : Saturday, March 23, 1985.
Circuit Length : 7.819 km/4.886 miles.
Race Length : 12 Hours (Start at 11am).
Weather Conditions : Rain on Thursday, clear skies on both Friday and Saturday.
Attendance : 60,000.

SUCCESSIVE LEADERS

Laps 1-3: John Paul Jr (March Buick).
Laps 4-24: Stuck (Porsche 962).
Laps 25-29: Redman (Jaguar XJR 5).
Laps 30-176: Mass (Porsche 962).
Laps 177 to Finish : Wollek/Foyt (Porsche 962).

FINAL RESULTS

1. Wollek/Foyt (Porsche 962) 281 laps or 2,197.139 km/1,373.211 miles in 12 hours 06m at an average speed of 183.083 kph/114.426 mph. 2. Bell/Holbert/Unser Jr (Porsche 962) 177 laps. 3. Halsmer/Knoop/Quester (Porsche 962) 268 laps. 4. Tullius/Robinson/Adams (Jaguar XJR 5) 259 laps. 4. Downing/Maffucci (Argo Mazda) 253 laps and 1st Light. 5. Dallenbach Jr/Jones (Ford Mustang) 251 laps and 1st GTO. 7. Leon/Leon/McKitterick (March Porsche) 250 laps. 8 Kendall/Hotchkiss/Kirby (Porsche 935 K3) 240 laps. 9. Delano/Petery/Moise (Pontiac Firebird) 237 laps. 10. Uria/Schaeffer/Figaro (Porsche Carrera) 237 laps. 11. Courtney/O'Neil/Hackney (Chevrolet Monza) 231 laps. 12. Jamsal/Fonesca/Mena (Porsche 934) 219 laps. 14. Burdsall/Welter/Nicholson (Tiga Mazda) 216 laps. 15. Auberlen/Jauker/Gang (Porsche 911) 209 laps and 1st GTU. 16. March/Pawley/Marsh (Argo Mazda) 205 laps. 17. Goral/X (Porsche 935) 204 laps. 19. Kendall/Kendall/Jones (Mazda RX 7) 202 laps. 21. O'Brien/van Steenburg (OVS Mazda GTP) 194 laps. 22. Lee/Julian (Buick Skyhawk) 192 laps. 23. Silver/Herman/Baker (Porsche 935) 192 laps. 25. Griffin/Speer/Hefner (Porsche 911) 188 laps.
Lap Record : Al Holbert (Porsche 962) in 2m 15.716s at an average speed of 207.425 kph/129.640 mph.
Previous lap record : Redman (Jaguar XJR 5) in 2m 22.751s at an average speed of 197.244 mph 123.277 mph.

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THACKWELL KICKS OFF

THE FIRST ROUND OF THE EUROPEAN F3000 CHAMPIONSHIP WAS HELD AT SILVERSTONE ON MARCH 24TH. DESPITE THE DRENCHING RAIN, ATTENDANCE FIGURES WERE HIGH AND THE DICE FOR FIRST PLACE AN EXCITING ONE.

A small number of drivers turned up at the Daily Express International Trophy, the maiden-round to the European F3000 championship. No-one was quite sure if it would fetch the kind of success that the organisers were hoping for and the abominable race conditions on the flooded track did not come as a blessing.

On Friday morning, the paddock was deserted. Not a soul in sight. Just two lorries silently glowering at each other in the cold and damp of Silverstone. The week-end was off to a wet start. By Saturday, seventeen cars had come to take part in the first two untimed 45-minute practice sessions, followed by the first official qualifying run. Not a healthy field, and many of the drivers spent more time in the pits than out on the track.

Frenchman Michel Ferté established pole position in his Mader-prepared March 85 B in 1m 17.92s ahead of Mike Thackwell in the Ralt RB 85. The four fastest qualifiers were on Bridgestone tyres.

Race day was a decidedly wet affair but Thackwell and Ferté put up a thrilling duel for the 15,000 spectators who had come to brave the appalling weather. Slick-shod Pirro jumped away brilliantly, shooting off ahead. The charging New Zealander lost no time in snatching the lead and quickly hauled himself clear as Pirro dropped back, clearly handicapped by his tyre choice. Ferté found himself in 3rd position behind Danner at the end of the opening lap after a slow start. He emerged in 2nd place on lap 2 and began to chase the Ralt. Thackwell had already built up a comfortable lead having the benefit of better visibility. By lap 5, the March had made up ground well and was firmly stuck to the Ralt's rear end, waiting to pounce at the first opportunity.

Santin was an early retirer when he went off on Lap 1 with Dumfries exiting on the following lap and Streiff on lap 8. Battle for first place was a three-man affair between the two Ralt team mates Thackwell and Nielsen (5th in qualifying), and Ferté in the March, all on wet tyres. Despite the atrocious driving conditions and spray, Nielsen put in the fastest lap time in 1m27.64s at an astonishing average speed of 192.452 kph/ 120.282 mph as he chased Thackwell home. Ferté spun off damaging his March's nose cone and smashed the rear wing losing 2nd place to Nielsen who finished 32s behind his team mate. Ferté crossed the line in 3rd position, 1m28s behind the winner.

Mike Thackwell won as likes to win —the hard way. "*The trouble with F3000,*" he said, "*is that it's much easier that F2. There's too much grip for the power we're getting.*"

A mere ten drivers were classified behind the Kiwi's red and white racing car which he drove *à la Jody Schekter* — a subtle combination of sheer talent and foresight.

N.H.

QUALIFYING

M. Ferté	March 85B	1m 17.92s	A/M
Thackwell	Ralt RB85	1m 18.11s	B/J
Pirro	March 85B	1m 18.45s	A/P
Dumfries	March 85B	1m 19.05s	A/P
Nielsen	Ralt RB85	1m 19.34s	B/J
Danner	March 85B	1m 19.48s	A/Sw
Moreno	Tyrrell 0 12	1m 19.65s	A/Sw
Streiff	AGS JH20	1m 19.90s	A/M
Santin	March 85B	1m 20.42s	B/M
Chauvet	March 85B	1m 20.89s	A/M
Tassin	Williams 08	1m 21.49s	A/Sm
Hytten	Lola T950	1m 21.51s	A/N
Tarquini	March 85B	1m 21.72s	B/M
Kaiser	March 85B	1m 22.24s	A/Sw
Langes	Tyrrell 0 12	1m 22.33s	A/Sw
Leoni	Williams 08	1m 22.85s	A/Sw
A. Ferté	Lola T950	(no times)	A/M

Tyres: A (Avon), B (Bridgestone)
Preparers: M (Mader), J (Judd), P (Peck), Sw (Swindon), Sm (Smith), N (Nicholson), Ford-Cosworth engines on all cars.

FINAL RESULTS

1. Mike Thackwell (Ralt RB 85), 44 laps in 1 hour 07m 41.01s, at an average speed of 183.985 kph/114.990 mph, 2. Nielsen (Ralt RB 85), 1 hour 08m 13s, 3. Michel Ferté (March 85 B), 1 hour 09m 09s, 4. Danner (March 85 B), 43 laps, 5. Tarquini (March 85 B), 42 laps, 6. Moreno (Tyrrell 02), 42 laps, 7. Pirro (March 85 B), 41 laps, 8. Alain Ferté (Lola T 950), 41 laps, 9. Hytten (Lola T 950), 41 laps, 10. Kaiser (March 85 B), 39 laps.
Finished but not classified: Tassin (Williams 08), 38 laps, Leoni (Williams 08), 38 laps.

Mike Thackwell (Ralt RB 85), the first-ever Formula 3000 victor drove a superb race to finish 32s ahead of team mate John Nielsen with the rain bucketing down (top).

Michel Ferté (March 85 B) started the race from pole position and was embroiled in a terrific dice for 1st place with Thackwell until he spun off badly damaging his nose cone and rear wing. He went on to finish a heroic third as Nielsen pipped him for the runner-up spot (left).

Emmanuelle Pirro (March 85 B) was first off the line and led the field into the first corner. He finished 7th after pitting to swop his slicks for wets (right).

PIRRO'S MARCH WIN IN APRIL

EMMANUEL PIRRO SEEMS TO HAVE DEVELOPED A STRONG LIKING FOR THE BRITISH CIRCUITS. THE ROMAN DRIVER ALSO WON AT THE FORMULA 3 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND HELD AT SILVERSTONE THREE YEARS AGO.

Pirro had the double advantage of being on the right tyres and of driving a beautifully behaving car and soon disposed of any immediate threats as he sailed off building a roomy cushion. All those drivers still on mixed tyres had no alternative but to stop and get slicks on fast.

After his pit stop Mike Thackwell roared out of the pits to rejoin the race in the mid-field. He indulged in some mighty fine driving and by lap 22 he had promoted himself into 2nd position; but Pirro was a clear 25s out front. Mike was going to have to chase hard and relentlessly to catch the Italian pack leader.

The steely New Zealander had his sights firmly fixed on Pirro's rear end and began closing in. Unperturbed, the Italian kept up the pace, treading surefootedly through the turns, not making the slightest error.

Pirro knew exactly what the situation was and he kept the upper hand. Meanwhile, Michel Ferté in 3rd position, knew he didn't stand much of a chance of joining in the leading draft's epic duel and wisely motored along to ensure that he got his points.

An hour had gone by since the race had begun and Pirro was still in command as he flashed past the black and white check flag. He had guided his March perfectly in front of 10,000 spectators to a splendid victory which he richly deserved. Fastest race lap was established by Danner in 1m 09.04s. Thackwell and Michel Ferté both finished on the leader's lap whereas 5th position man Tarquini conceded a lap. Sixteen of the twenty starters were classified. Nielsen did not finish in the points as he spun off and then made a pit stop to get his front cover changed which means that Thackwell is the provisional F3000 leader after the first two British rounds of the F3000 series.

There were twenty cars at the second round of the F3000 championship staged at Thruxton over Easter. It was a long race (204.7 km/127.9 miles) and the constantly changing weather had the drivers all worrying if they had made the right tyre choice on race day.

Italian driver Emmanuel Pirro was often a forerunner during last year's European F2 series but unfortunately he never quite achieved the success he was aiming at. He won at Thruxton, his March 85 B shod with Avon rubber, in superb fighting style ahead of Mike Thackwell and Michel Ferté. He was on the right tyres and ran with great consistency giving a fine display of his skills.

Mike Thackwell, too, was on the right rubber but he lost his chance of making it a double victory after his success at Silverstone two weeks previously on the opening lap of the 54-lap race. He made a poor start from the first slot on the starting grid and found himself somewhere in the mid-field. In the squabble to the first turn his front cover was damaged upsetting the aerodynamics when a driver clipped him. Moreno was even more unlucky in that he didn't even complete an entire lap. He went off and was forced to watch the others get on with the battle from the sideline.

Michel Ferté had asked for mixed tyres to be fitted to his March and he made a perfect getaway off the line and out onto the damp track. He was leading the dance in front of Thackwell and his damaged front cover, Kaiser — who had made a surprisingly good start, Tarquini, Pirro and Danner. Thackwell pitted on lap 4 and Ferté went through to take the lead. The sun then appeared and the track dried quickly. The Frenchman began to seriously think about making a pit stop to change his wet tyres. Slick-tyred Pirro took a firm grip on the race from that point. He ran round Kaiser while Danner hoisted himself up into 3rd.

FINAL RESULTS

1. Emmanuel Pirro (March 85B) 54 laps in 1 hour 05m 08s. 2. Thackwell (Ralt RB 85) 1hour 05m 11s. 3. Michel Ferté (March 85 B) 1hour 05m 22s. 4. Kaiser (March 85 B) 1hour 6m 18s. 5. Tarquini (March 85 B) 53 laps. 6. Danner (March 85 B) 53 laps. 7. Dumfries (March 85 B) 53 laps. 8. Grouillard (March 85 B) 53 laps. 9. Santin (March 85 B) 52 laps. 10. Hytten (Lola T950) 52 laps. 11. Lang (March 85 B) 52 laps. 12. Alain Ferté (Lola T950) 52 laps, etc.
There were 16 classified drivers at the finish.

Emmanuel Pirro (March 85 B) from Italy drove a strong convincing race to clinch victory at the second F3000 race held at Thruxton.

Mike Thackwell (Ralt RB 85) completely flunked the start. He made a remarkable recovery carving his way up through the field, but the leading March crossed the line 3s ahead.

Frenchman Michel Ferté (March 85 B) made the wrong choice of tyres. He finished third for the second time in a row.

Preston Jr (Lancia Rally) DPPI

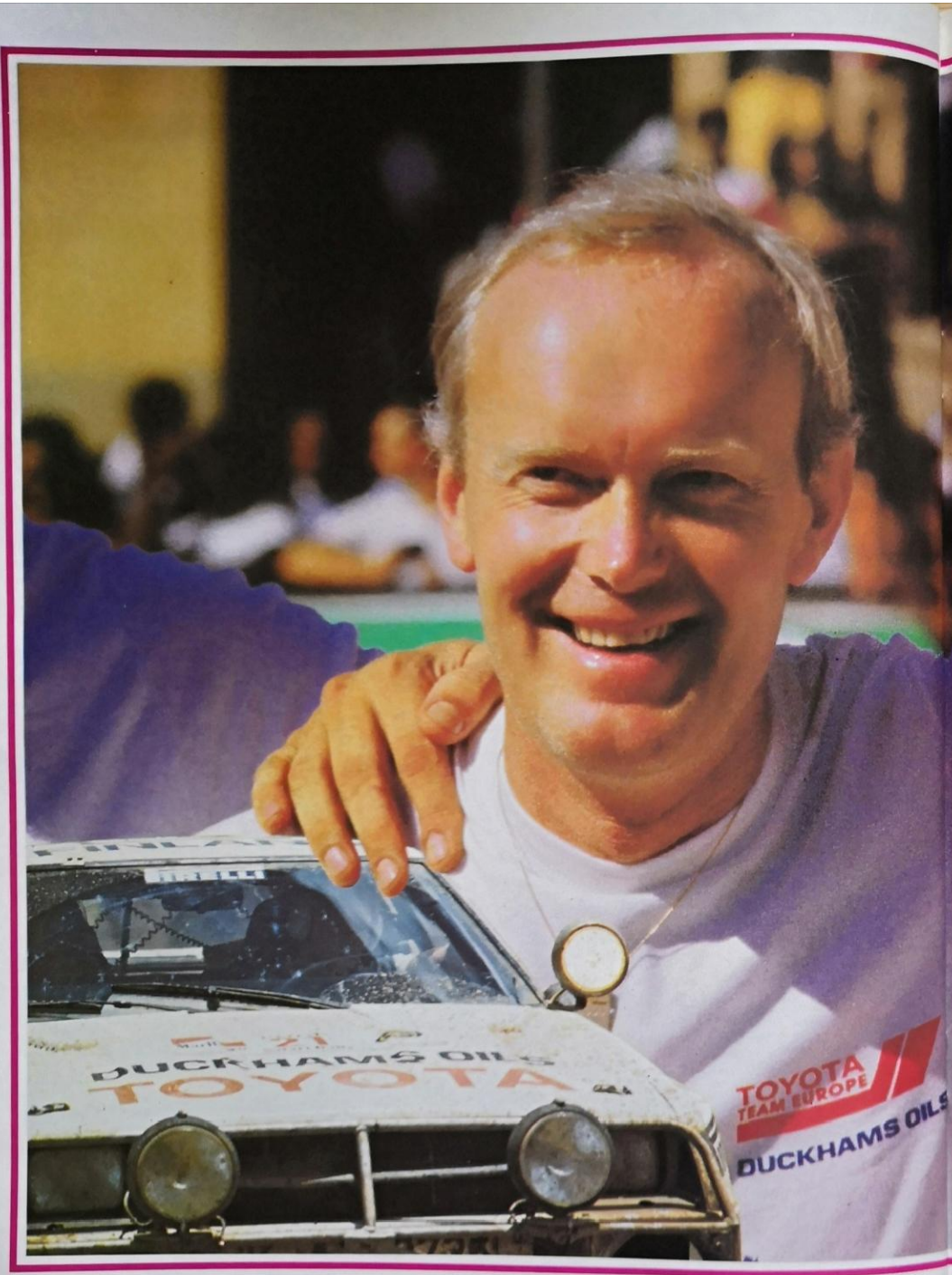
THE ITALIAN CARS NEVER REALLY JOINED IN THE HUNT FOR THE SAFARI CROWN

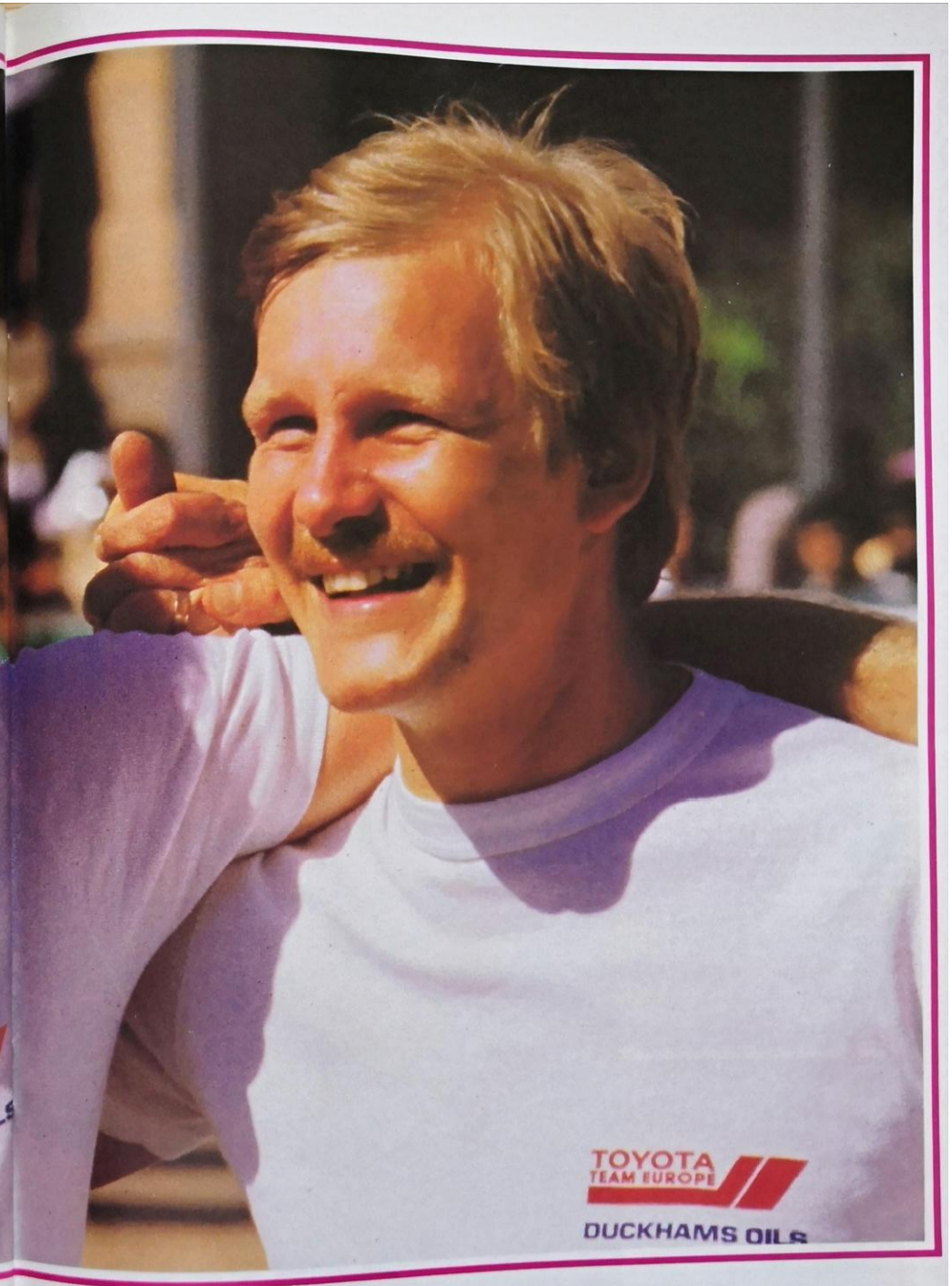
Weber (Opel Manta 400) DPPI

AALTONEN AND WEBER'S LUCK RAN OUT PREVENTING THEM FROM MAKING IT AN OPEL 1-2 AT KENYA

Vatanen (Peugeot 205 Turbo 16) DPPI

ONLY SALONEN'S PEUGEOT 205 MADE IT TO THE FINISH. THE TAMNG OF THE LION?





TOYOTA AGAIN

THE WINNER OF THE 33RD SAFARI RALLY WAS COMPETING ON HIS FIRST EVER AFRICAN EVENT!

by Michel Lizin

Tradition is definitely not what it used to be. There was a time when the Safari was the Rally where maturity and experience often counted more than overall speed. For a long time, local drivers were the only ones to stand a chance of winning, Joginder Singh or Shekhar Mehtar for example. Then the extremely experienced drivers such as Mikkola, Andersson or Waldegaard got in on the act. Ari Vatanen's win here in 1983 with the Opel Ascona 400 was generally considered as a one-off.

Then what happens?

Juha Kankkunen is the latest of the Flying Finns. He celebrated his 26th birthday only two days before the start of the Safari but he is already considered as one of the most talented drivers around today and he certainly is ambitious.

Following his two accidents on last year's RAC and New Zealand, many took him to be just another of those unpredictable youngsters that his country regularly throws out. On the contrary, he is already a very mature driver. In the space of a year he has learnt to speak English well enough to improve his relationship with the press and, of course, team managers. All he was hoping for on the Safari was to get to the finish and, if possible, into the top three.

"The difficult thing for me was to drive slowly."

Kankkunen's victory here was not a matter of luck. Along with co-driver Fred Gallagher, he managed to maintain the pace of the front runners whilst not asking too much of the Toyota's mechanicals in an effort to avoid the problems which plagued the other top drivers.

"I owe a great deal to Björn Waldegaard. Last November we underwent over 5,000 km of testing together in Kenya. We were both in the same car and Björn drove for most of the time. I just watched him drive. I saw how he studied the road ahead, anticipating what was coming up. At the same time, he explained everything he was doing, giving me advice after advice. I felt like a schoolchild but I didn't mind at all with Waldegaard as teacher."

THE KIDS

Juha Kankkunen was not the only "beginner" to shine on the Safari. After the various electrical and shock absorber problems that plagued Waldegaard, it was first of all Aaltonen that took the lead, then after the 47-year old Finn dropped down the leader board, it was Erwin Weber that led.

Weber took the command when Aaltonen's clutch began to slip and led until he too fell victim to head gasket and then piston problems. Nevertheless he had driven exceedingly well with rally tactics as sound as those of Kankkunen or the experienced drivers like Aaltonen or Waldegaard. He was always in amongst the leaders and, by the end of the first leg, he was already in second position.

The young German is a product of the Opel Kadett Cup which he entered in 1981, and in 1983 he was German Rally Champion. The Safari was Weber's first ever World Championship round! If he had managed to hold on to his lead, that would have been quite something.

THE OLD MEN

Sunday April 7, 2 o'clock in the morning. The avenue in front of the Kenyatta Conference Centre is brilliantly lit but more or less deserted. The spectators have gone to bed and only a few journalists and marshals await the remaining cars. There are already six cars in the parc fermé but their crews are fast asleep. The two Opel Mantas and the two Toyota Celicas arrived first, more or less together. Two Nissan 240s followed after a while. Six rear wheel drive, front engined, fixed rear axle cars occupying the first six places of a World Championship round. The parc fermé had something of the past about it. What is more, four of those cars, the Opels and the Nissans, were using normally-aspirated engines and carburettors. Only Toyota have moved with the times with their turbos and electronic injections. The Audis and the Lancias have already packed up their bags and the only Peugeot 205 Turbo 16 left in the Rally is Timo Salonen's, nearly 4 hours behind the leaders.

"On the Safari, the more basic your car is the higher your chances are of winning. The car is less trouble-prone and, when you have to work on it, the mechanicals are a lot simpler and easy to understand."

Girgio Pianta, test driver and workshop manager goes someway to explaining the problem before the Rally start. *"I don't think Audi or Peugeot have got much of a chance. It's not because their cars or their teams are bad, it's just that they're doing the whole of the World Championship. As I see it, they can't really tackle the event in the right condi-*

Hard facts

There were no less than 17 crews with a real chance of overall victory. Audi, Peugeot, Lancia, Opel, Toyota and Nissan were all present with official factory entries.

Two Audi Sport Quattros were entered for Mikkola/Hertz and Blomqvist/Cederberg and this was their first rally with the new 6-speed gearbox. Top speed was given as over 220kph (137 mph), roughly 20kph more than the Lancias and the Peugeots. The French manufacturer had sent along three 205 Turbo 16s for Vatanen/Harryman, Salonen/Harjanne and Saby/Fauchille. The special 'Safari' preparation that they had gone through put the weight of the cars up to 1,130kg, 90kg heavier than the Lancias which were, in fact, 50kg lighter than in 1984. Two of the Lancias had clocked up no less than 30,000km testing for the event in the hands of Vic Preston Junior. At sea-level the Italian cars boasted 330bhp, 30bhp more than in 1984. There were three cars entered for Alen/Kivimaki, Bettega/Perissinot and Preston Jr/Lyall.

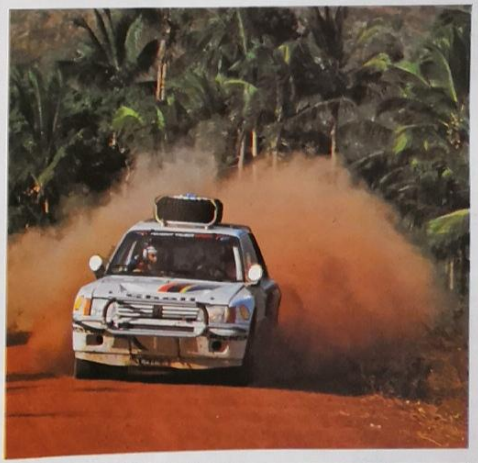
Nissan had brought along the latest version of the 240RS which they have called "ET". The engine size has been increased by 50cc and, thanks to a number of modifications, power is up to 275bhp with an improvement in the flexibility of the engine. They have at last adopted rack and pinion steering, the gearbox has been strengthened and, according to Shekhar Mehta, the power is transmitted to the wheels a lot more efficiently. Three of these cars were entered for Mehta/Combes, Kirkland/Levitan and Ambrosino/Le Saux whilst Shah/Smith disposed of a 1984 version. The three Toyota Celica Twin Cam Turbos were crewed by Waldegaard/Thorszelius, Kankkunen/Gallagher and local crew Horsey/Williamson. The Toyotas boasted the highest top-speed of all the factory cars at 230kph (144mph). Finally, Opel had entered two Manta 400s for Aaltonen/Drews and Weber/Wanger. The rear axle had been strengthened whereas the engine set up was more 'European', with a high compression ratio and power output at between 275 and 280bhp.

Audi, Opel and Peugeot were on Michelins, Lancia on Pirellis and Toyota and the Nissans were on Japanese Dunlops. Apart from the big six, there were two other factory teams at the start, both Japanese. Daihatsu had brought along four 1200cc Charades, one of which was for Ian Duncan, and Subaru had entered five Leones, four of which featured the 1800cc turbo engine and 180bhp.

A land of contrasting colours.

Vatanen fought hard to get his 205 to the finish, but in vain.

Mehta didn't make it his 5th Safari title.



tions. The problems that crop up in testing and on the Rally are completely different from those you meet on other rounds."

It is true that since the World Championship was created, never has the winning manufacturer won the Safari in the same year.

Whether it be a lack of personnel or a lack of time to spend on preparation of the cars, Giorgio Pianta knows the problems as well as anybody, basically because they face his own team. After his three cars retired, he went further:

"This Rally is incredible. Last year, we came up with a number of problems: suspension, gearbox, shock absorbers... We managed to find a way round those problems only to find that we were faced with new ones this year, principally the engine and the distributor. OK. We're not doing a full season this year but the Lancia Delta S4 is taking up a lot of our time. I haven't stopped going back and forth between Italy and Kenya. Our engines man, for example, couldn't spare the time to come out and look after the cars on the Rally. Perhaps he wouldn't have been able to do anything but both Bettega's and Alen's cars suffered from water injection problems and, it's true to say, they both went out with engine failure. I'm not trying to say that it wasn't my fault. When Lancia win, they say 'Bravo Pianta'. This time I say 'Not bravo Pianta'. I assume my responsibilities but I try and find out the reasons."

PERFORMANCE

In pure performance terms, the various cars at the start of the Safari Rally were on a remarkably equal footing. A Nissan 240RS able to battle with a Peugeot 205 Turbo 16 is, for example, something difficult to imagine in Europe. Cesare Florio comments. *"In Kenya, the terrain is either very fast, very rough or twisty. Anyone can build a car that goes quickly in a straight line and, when the going is rough, everybody goes at the same speed anyway. In those conditions, you don't need an exceptional car nor do you need to be an exceptional driver. On the twisty parts, the Lancias proved that they were faster than the Peugeots."*

Giorgio Pianta is a little more reserved. *"In proportion, today's rally cars lose more than the conventional cars on an African-style rally. We are forced to use excessively hard suspensions, we don't have negative camber to slow down tyre wear. I would say that we lose about 30% of our competitiveness as far as road handling is concerned."*

THE DEBACLE

Audi made no attempt to hide their ambitions at the start of the Safari. In an effort to better prepare their Rally, only two Quattro Sports had been entered. *"The last problem we had with this car was the gearbox. Here, we are using a new 6-speed box for the first time. The new box is stronger too. It's sure to work."*

Audi should know as well as anybody, theory in rallying does not mean results. The new box lasted less than 200km on Blomqvist's and Mikkola's cars. Only 450km into the Rally, the Swede was already out after a second gearbox failure. For the Finn, another 6-speed box was taken from a recce car. His gearbox problems were solved but he retired soon after with a cracked crankshaft. *"We have had a bad run of boxes. The one we fitted to Hannu's car had done 3,000km without a problem. On the other hand, the new ones were obviously overheating due to a lack of play between certain parts. It's a production fault."*

OK. That's probably true but it's a bit late to find out. What other factory team would dare start the Safari Rally with such an important new element and after so little testing? And what other factory team wouldn't have taken the precaution of taking along a few of the old-style gearboxes with them?

In the Audi camp, they continue to place total confidence in new techniques without sufficient trials and testing. The premature competition debuts of the Quattro A2 in Corsica in 1983 and the Sport Quattro twelve months later are real examples of that mistake but apparently not sufficient to change Audi thinking.

Peugeot's final result was not too brilliant either and the few points they managed to score probably won't have much importance at the end of the season. At least the French team has a valid excuse; a lack of Safari experience (with the present set-up). The car suffered a number of problems, some of which had already been found in pre-rally testing but had been considered solved. Rarely have teams been able to manage good results on their first ever Safari. Opel had to wait four years for victory. The exception to the rule, of course, was Toyota's triumph in 1984 which was the first official Toyota entry on the event.

RELIABILITY

It is no doubt because of the lesson learned by Waldegaard's victory last year that the principal favourites shot off at a rythm faster than ever. The Audis were the first to drop out, followed by the Peugeots and the Lancias, leaving only the conventional cars. The Nissans turned out to be alot stronger than last year but their only really experienced driver, Shekhar Mehta, retired after going off. Let's not forget, though, Kirkland's fine result.

The Toyota suffered shock absorber problems which they had not experienced in 1984 and, for a long moment, it looked as though an Opel Manta 400 was going to win. On the first two legs, they only suffered from broken fan belts, a problem already encountered twelve months ago. However, victory was lost when Aaltonen's clutch began to slip and Weber's engine started to show signs of wear towards the end of the Rally. Once again, veteran Rauno Aaltonen thought for a long while that he was going to win. Once again, he'll have to be happy with a top four placing and postpone his dreams of victory until next year. After all, he'll only be 48 then.

In conclusion, the winner of the 1985 Safari turned out to be the least fragile car. With his Toyota Celica Twin Cam Turbo, Juha Kankkunen took his first ever World Championship win. ■

Salonen pushed ahead gamely.

Team by Team

Not the usual team by team column but a review of the back-up material deployed by each of the major manufacturers. As per usual, Audi managed to break all the records with one helicopter, a plane, 65 European mechanics, 25 local mechanics, 26 various service vehicles (including tyre and fuel trucks), 2 chase cars and 10 mud cars.

The Peugeot drivers could count on 25 European mechanics, 25 locals, 24 service vehicles (including 5 vans shipped out from France), one chase car (driven by JP Nicolas) but no mud cars except those offered by Opel.

Like Peugeot, Lancia used a plane and a helicopter but their 'ground forces' were much lighter: 24 Italian mechanics, 12 locals, 13 service vehicles, no chase cars and 4 mud cars.

The three other major teams, Opel, Nissan and Toyota, did not use helicopters but had not omitted to charter planes, essential for radio communications. Nissan had only brought along 8 Japanese mechanics for 24 locals, 12 vehicles, 3 chase cars and 4 mud cars. Opel had 23 European mechanics, 10 locals, 15 service vehicles, 2 chase cars (driven by 'Nalle' Johansson and Reinhard Hainbach) and 8 mud cars. Toyota were far from being the weakest team with 31 Europeans, 40 locals, 24 service vehicles, 1 chase car and 5 mud cars.

It's always difficult to judge the effectiveness of all these modifications. For example, the splitting of a pipe leading to the turbo at last year's San Remo and, again, during pre-Safari testing led the Peugeot technicians to develop a stronger pipe. Yet it was this pipe that gave out on Salonen's and Saby's cars during the first leg. Fortunately, the French team had brought along supplies of the old model which turned out to be extremely useful. Audi would have done well to adopt a similar policy. The two Quattros were both using the new sixspeed box for the first time and on both cars the gearbox broke... the problem was that there were none of the conventional boxes available to replace them.

Mzungu

A *'mzungu'* is a white man. In the plural, for some reason, it becomes Wazungo. At the bar of the press room an English colleague asked for a beer. The waiter disappeared and was soon back bearing a tray with a bottle and a glass on it. For quite a while, he wandered around the room, tray in hand. A bit frustrated at seeing his refreshment continuously passing under his nose, the journalist called out, *"Excuse me, is that beer for me?"* The waiter broke out into an enormous smile and explained, *"Sorry, sir, but for me, Wazungos all look alike!"*

Penny wise

Franco Listro, press relations manager for Lancia, was seen crying to himself in a corner of the press room.

"You know? All three of our cars have just lost 30 minutes because of a part that's worth 200 liras." (about 10 pence). A nearby Italian journalist nodded his head knowingly, *"You know why rally cars are more and more expensive?"*

"No."

"So that nobody ever again can say that they've lost a rally because of a part worth 200 liras."

FIRST LEG

Starting April 4, at 10am and due to finish at 8am on the 5, the first leg covered a total of 1,647km. With the exception of just 5km, the whole leg was run over dry roads. The first difficult section, Taïta Hills, was about 450km from the start. Before reaching there, however, the Audis and two of the Peugeots had already been delayed. Just after TC3, after only 180km and after only 107km of loose surface, both Quattros were stopped with the same problem; a broken gearbox. To replace the faulty parts cost Mikkola and Blomqvist 83 and 94 minutes respectively. A further gearbox problem forced Blomqvist into early retirement and Mikkola joined him soon afterwards after the engine had given up the ghost. Audi's rally was already over.

In the Peugeot camp, Salonen and Saby lost more than 20 minutes when a pipe leading to the turbo split on both cars. Salonen was also unfortunate to puncture. It was Lancia that dominated in the Taïta Hills section and Alen was in the lead with only 6 minutes penalty but at the Mombasa halt, after already 723km, it was Bettega in first position with Vatanen and Alen 1 minute behind, Preston 2 minutes, Waldegaard and the excellent Weber 3, followed by Aaltonen and Kirkland.

Lancia's joy was short-lived as Alen hit a rock shortly after the restart, destroying the front of the car and forcing him to retire. Bettega was having fuel pump problems and Preston broke an accelerator cable. Later, the two remaining Lancias both fell victim to snapped distributor arms. Horsey had been off in Taïta Hills and retired. Vatanen was not having a trouble-free run, a shock absorber mounting giving way followed by a broken front right shock absorber itself. Later, a faulty fuel pump fuse left him with one tank out of action and out of fuel, the Finn losing 30 minutes. Salonen's problems were more serious when he broke a distribution belt and Bruno Saby was the first Peugeot driver to retire when he broke the chassis after taking a deep rut a little too quickly.

Following everybody's problems, the Toyotas found themselves in the lead along with the Opels, although the two German cars had both lost ten or so minutes when their fan belts broke. Waldegaard was not able to make the most of his advantage, losing 5 minutes with electrical problems, but he was still in the lead at the end of the first leg at Nairobi with 70 minutes penalty.

The leading trio at this stage was Toyota, Opel and Nissan, who had suffered no problems at all.

SECOND LEG

Although the second leg covered 1,999km, it was probably not the most arduous since it included four rest halts at Kericho, Kakamega, Eldoret and Nakuru. The first victim was Attilio Bettega whose front suspension broke on the Lancia, losing him 2 hours and eventually forcing him to retire. Björn Waldegaard had the firm intention of using the same tactics that had served him so well twelve months before, trying to force the pace of the rally. His car, unfortunately, had other plans. The Swedish driver was first of all slowed by an alternator failure then the rear right shock absorber gave way. He managed to do 180km like that but caused severe body damage and damaged the fuel pump. Repairs took nearly 70 minutes and Björn found himself in eighth position.

Vatanen and Preston proved to be the two fastest on the leg and the Finn had managed to get within 17 minutes of the new leader, Aaltonen. At the Nakuru halt, Preston was only 26 minutes behind the Opel driver. Neither Vatanen, nor Preston had been spared problems, the former losing 7 minutes with a cracked brake disc and the latter losing 4 minutes after a throttle cable had snapped.

Rain fell during the Nakuru-Nairobi section on the Mau escarpment. Mehta was to be the first victim going off the road and, despite the rapid intervention of a service crew, was unable to continue. A little afterwards, Preston lost his rear left wheel after the studs had sheered and the Kenyan lost an hour. He managed to continue but was forced to retire when the distributor arm broke. He had a spare one available but he couldn't manage to get it set right.

Vatanen's radiator shook loose at about the same time. The radiator lost its water, the Peugeot overheated and the gasket blew. Vatanen was out of the rally too. Salonen had been slowed throughout the second leg by all sorts of problems: oil pump belt, turbo pipe, turbo circlip, turbo, shock absorber and, finally, collapsed front suspension. All that left him 3 hours 40 minutes behind the leader.

Back at Nairobi, at the end of the leg, the experienced Aaltonen and beginners Weber and Kankkunen were within 13 minutes of each other. Waldegaard had managed to haul himself back up to 4th position, 1 hour 02m behind the leader with Kirkland, who had gearbox problems, just a minute behind.

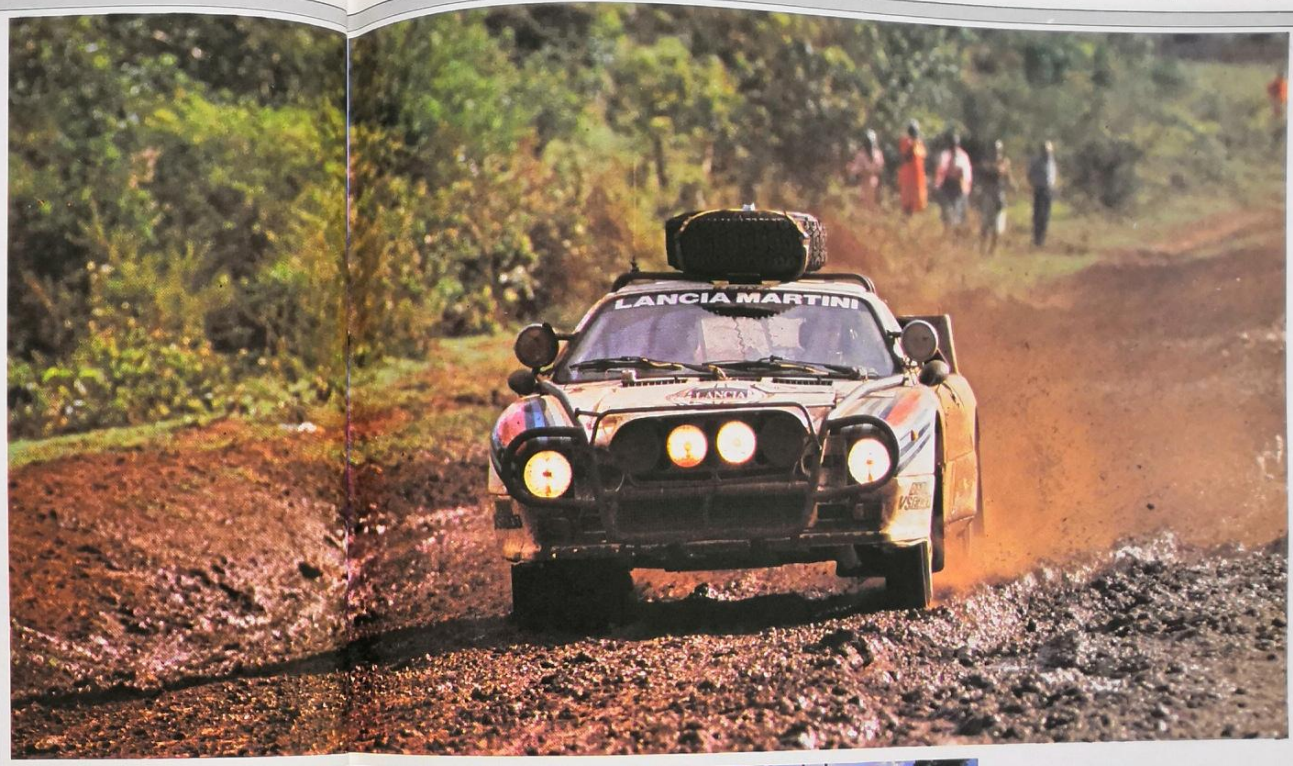
THIRD LEG

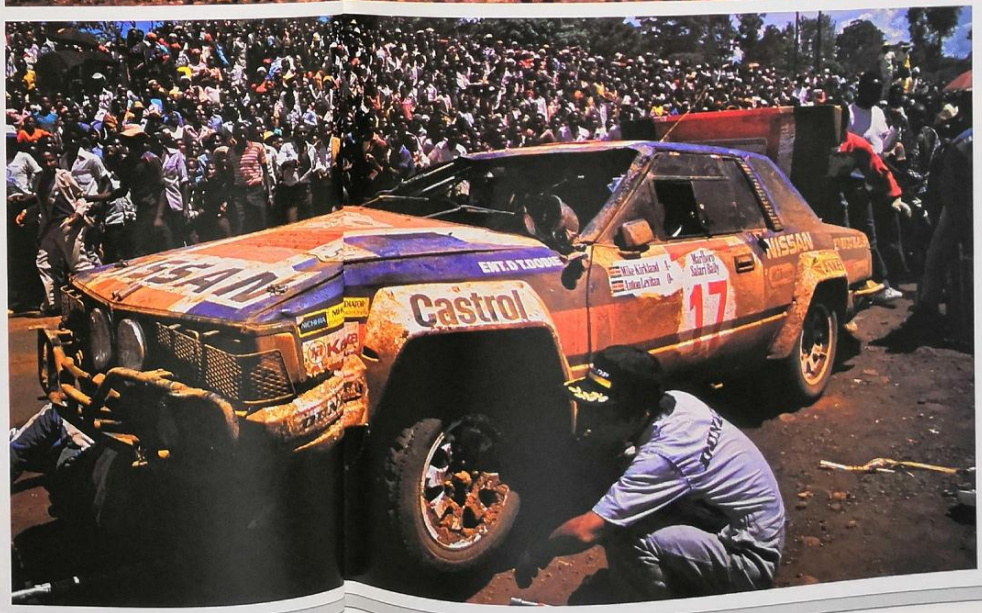
The crews in with a chance of victory spent most of the third and final leg surveying each other until an oil leak caused Aaltonen's clutch to slip. The Finn lost all hope when replacement of the clutch cost him over an hour. Fellow Opel driver, Weber inherited the lead which was further increased when Kankkunen broke a shock absorber on his Toyota, losing 33 minutes.

Just when the young German driver started to think victory might be his, he began to have a number of engine problems, head gasket, valve and then piston. In all, his difficulties cost him more than two hours.

Waldegaard lost his new found second place momentarily when he suffered shock absorber problems, letting Kirkland through. However the Nissan driver went off the road, breaking his windscreen. He lost little time in replacing it but it was enough to let the Swede back through to clinch a one-two for Toyota.

Kankkunen's lead was not threatened by his team mate and he managed to stay clear of problems until the finish. Kirkland finished third behind the two Toyotas and in front of Aaltonen who at no time lost his friendly smile. Weber managed to coax his Opel to the finish, ending up fifth in front of Ambrosino's Nissan, Salonen's Peugeot and Iwase's and Patel's Nissans. Thanks to Vittuli and Alam, the Subaru 1.8 RX Turbos managed a fine one-two in Group A.





Lancia, still as obstinate as ever, got bogged down yet again.

Kirkland the best local man in the best-placed Datsun.

Opel's bravery went unrewarded.

Togetherness

In an attempt to reduce costs (!), Peugeot and Toyota shared the same radio-relay plane. Similarly, Peugeot were able to make use of Opel's mud cars although, in this case, money was probably not the main reason. A malicious rumour had it that Peugeot had completely forgotten about them but it must be said that there are relatively few experienced mud car crews available and most of the better ones are on contract with the traditional Safari competitors. Peugeot's thinking was no doubt to be able to have some of the better crews available, fully realising that, if a Peugeot and an Opel arrived at the same time at a mud hole, then the German car would take priority.

Safari preparation

Rally cars on the Safari are prepared in a pretty similar way year after year. Take the Peugeot 205 Turbo 16 for example; the spare wheel had been taken out of the front to make way for a supplementary 70-litre tank, bringing the total capacity of the three (!) tanks up to 180 litres. One spare wheel was fitted to the roof and a second was placed above the engine. Fresh air inlets had been fitted in the side windows, an anti-zebra bar was mounted in front of the auxilliary lighting and high pressure headlight washers were coupled to a high capacity water tank. The sealing of the clutch had been improved, the wishbones and rear drive had been strengthened, the compression ratio had been increased and bigger, more efficient air filters had been fitted, etc etc.

Bruno the bushman

With his curious hexagonal spectacles perched on his nose, his hay-wire moustache and colonial shorts, Bruno Berglund from Sweden, is one of the more excentric characters of the Safari. Most of the time you'll find him wearing metal-toed football boots, wielding an imported baseball bat in an effort to dissuade the local population from getting too near the cars at Opel service points. Don't worry. It's only for effect.
Bruno, who was formerly Anders Küllang's co-driver has fallen in love with Africa in general and Kenya in particular, and it is here that he spends the majority of his time during the first four months of the year, busily preparing the Opel service schedule for the Safari. During the rally, he sits alongside 'Nolle' Johansson in the chase car, without a doubt the most efficient chase car and the most present.
When planning the service schedule, Berglund selects the exact locations for each service point, sorts out the route for each service vehicle to follow, along with bend by bend notes for each of them. Believe it or not, he carries out most of this work alone. The staff of the Intercontinental Hotel at Nairobi watch him as he leaves in the morning in a test car with nothing more than a set of notes and a few maps for company.
This year, Bruno seemed to be ill at ease, a little upset until about three quarters of the way through the second leg. That's when the rain made its appearance. The Swede suddenly came to and started to sort out the mud cars, getting his own Manta 400 promptly stuck in the mud. Forced to get out and push he found himself covered in the stuff. A smile crossed his face. "*At last the rally's started.*"

TECHNICAL DATA

33rd edition of the Safari Rally.
Date: April 4-8, 1985.
4th round of the World Rally Championship for makes.
4th round of the World Rally Championship for drivers.
Start and Finish: Nairobi, Kenya.
Route: 5,197 km/2,248 miles divided into three legs. No special stages. 99 time checks.
1st Leg: Nairobi-Mombassa-Nairobi, from April 4 at 10:00 to April 5 at 07:00, covering a total of 1,647 km/1,029,3 miles.
2nd Leg: Nairobi-Kakamega-Eldoret-Nakuru, from Friday April 5 at 16:00 to Sunday April 7 at 01:00, covering a total of 1,999 km/1,249 miles.
3rd Leg: Nairobi-Meru-Nairobi, from Sunday April 7 at 16:00 to Monday April 8 at 15:00 covering a total of 1,551 km/969,3 miles.
Entries: 79 - **Starters:** 71 - **Finishers and Classified:** 20.

FOR THE RECORD

Second win for Toyota at its second Safari participation.
First time since 1983 that all the works Lancias retired on a world championship round.
First time in its rallying career that the Peugeot 205 Turbo 16 never led at any moment of the Rally.
Erwin Weber was a provisional Rally leader on his first world championship participation.
Maiden Safari win for Juha Kankkunen on his first Safari participation.
Juha Kankkunen is the youngest ever Safari winner.

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Drivers
(Results after fourth of eleven rounds: Monte Carlo, Sweden, Portugal and Safari.)

1. Timo Salonen (SF)	12	+	12	+	20	+	4	= 48
2. Ari Vatanen (SF)	20	+	20	+	—	+	—	= 40
3. Stig Blomqvist (S)	10	+	15	+	10	+	—	= 35
4. Walter Röhrl (D)	15	+	—	+	12	+	—	= 27
5. J. Kankkunen (SF)	—	+	—	+	—	+	20	= 20
6. M. Biasion (I)	2	+	—	+	15	+	—	= 17
7. B. Waldegaard (S)	—	+	—	+	—	+	15	= 15
8. M. Kirkland (EAK)	—	+	—	+	—	+	12	= 12
9. H. Mikkola (SF)	—	+	10	+	—	+	—	= 10

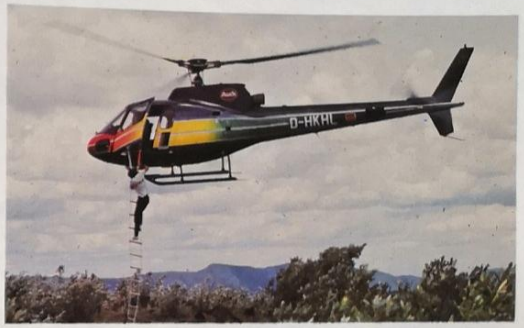
11. Bruno Saby (F), Per Eklund (S), Werner Grissmann (A) and Erwin Weber (D) 8, 15. Henri Toivonen (F), Gunnar Pettersson (S), Jose Miguel (P) and Alain Ambrosino (CI) 6, 19. Danny Snobeck (F), Mikaël Ericsson (S) and Carlos Bica (P) 4, 22. Jean-Claude Andruet (F), Ingvar Carlsson (S), Santinho Mendes (P) and Yashuhiro Iwase (EAK) 3, 26. Mats Johnsson (S), Jorge ortigga (P) and Ashok Patel (EAK) 2, 29. Maurice Chomat (F), Kenneth Eriksson (S), Leite Faria (P) and Carlo Vittuli (EAK) 1. 32 classified drivers.

PAST RESULTS (Last ten years)

1975: Andersson/Hertz (Peugeot 504)
1976: Joginder Singh/Doig (Mitsubishi Lancer)
1977: Waldegaard/Thorszelius (Ford Escort)
1978: Nicolas/Lefèbvre (Peugeot 504 Coupé V6)
1979: Mehta/Doughty (Datsun 160 J)
1980: Mehta/Doughty (Datsun Violet GT)
1981: Mehta/Doughty (Datsun Violet GT)
1982: Mehta/Doughty (Datsun Violet GT)
1983: Vatanen/Harryman (Opel Ascona 400)
1984: Waldegaard/Thorszelius (Toyota Celica Twin Cam Turbo).

FEATURES

Cars:
First official outing for the Nissan 240 TS ET.
First official outing for the Group A Subaru Leone RX Turbo.
First African Rally for the Peugeot 205 Turbo 16.
Drivers:
First world championship victory for Juha Kankkunen and his co-driver Fred Gallagher.
First Wold Rally Championship round for Erwin Weber from Germany.
First official works Nissan drive for Alain Ambrosino.
First works drive for David Horsey.



SUCCESSIVE LEADERS

TC2: 61 cars with no penalty points.
TC3: 14 cars with no penalty points.
TC4-5: 12 cars with no penalty points.
TC6-9: Alen.
TC10-17: Bettega.
TC18-39: Waldegaard.
TC4: Weber.
TC41: Weber and Aaltonen.
TC42-81: Aaltonen.
TC82-92: Weber.
TC93-99 (finish): Kankkunen.

MAIN RETIREMENTS

Blomqvist/Cederberg (Audi Quattro Sport), gearbox - TC6.
Horsey/Williamson (Toyota Celica Twin Cam Turbo), engine over-heating - TC8.
Alen/Kivimaki (Lancia Rally) engine - TC15.
Saby/Fauchille (Peugeot 205 Turbo 16), broken chassis - TC18.
Shah/Smith (Nissan 240 RS), rear track, TC20.
Mikkola/Hertz (Audi Quattro Sport), crankshaft, TC20.
Bettega/Perissinot (Lancia Rally), engine - TC51.
Vatanen/Harryman (Peugeot 205 Turbo 16), engine - TC66.
Mehta/Combes (Nissan 240 RS), off road - TC66.
Preston Jr/Lyall (Lancia Rally), distributor - TC70.

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

(Makes)
(Results after fourth of eleven rounds: Monte Carlo, Sweden, Portugal and Safari.)

Peugeot	18	+	18	+	18	+	6	= 60
Audi	16	+	16	+	14	+	—	= 46
Toyota	—	+	—	+	10	+	18	= 28
Lancia	8	+	—	+	16	+	—	= 24
Nissan	—	+	—	+	4	+	14	= 18
Opel	—	+	4	+	—	+	12	= 16
Subaru	—	+	—	+	—	+	9	= 9
Ford	—	+	—	+	8	+	—	= 8
Renault	6	+	—	+	—	+	—	= 6
Mazda	—	+	6	+	—	+	—	= 6
Citroën	4	+	—	+	—	+	—	= 4

FINAL RESULTS

1. Juha Kankkunen/Fred Gallagher (Toyota Celica TC Turbo) 318 points.
2. Bjorn Waldegaard/Hans Thorszelius (Toyota Celica TC Turbo) 352 points.
3. Mike Kirkland/Anton Levitan (Nissan 240 RS) 361 points.
4. Rauno Aaltonen/Lofty Drews (Opel Manta) 372 points.
5. Erwin Weber/Gunter Wanger (Opel Manta) 424 points.
6. Alain Ambrosino/Daniel Le Saux (Nissan 240 S) 478 points.
7. Timo Salonen/Seppo Harjanne (Peugeot 205 Turbo 16) 549 points.
8. Yashuiro Iwase/Sudhir Vinayak (Nissan 240 NS) 742 points.
9. Ashok Patel/Dalbir Kandola (Nissan 240 RS) 848 points.
10. Carlo Vittuli/Robin Nixon (Subaru 1.8 Turbo 4WD) 928 points.
11. Vishnu Dhutia/Crispin Sasson (Nissan 240 RS) 1,049 points.
12. Javaid Alam/Shirish Patel (Subaru 1.8 4WD) 1,076 points.
13. Takeshi Hirabayashi/Sukhy Soin (Daihatsu Charade) 1,228 points.
14. Ashok Pattni/Zahid Mogul (Daihatsu Charade) 1,272 points.
15. Gérard Miller/Richard Mathews (Range Rover) 1,303 points.
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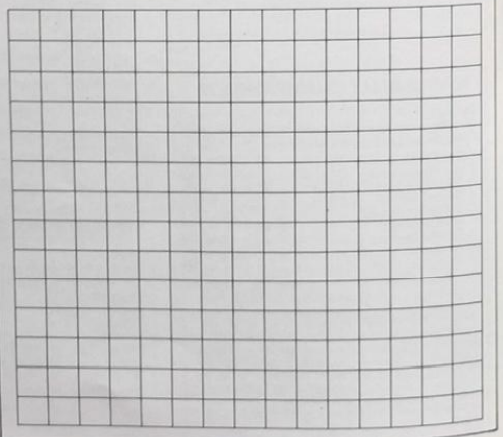

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POSTBAG

PIRONI NEWS

Dear GPI,
I'm very pleased to see you back again.
What has happened to Didier Pironi lately?
Yours faithfully,
Ann Dounham,
Stable Cottage,
Braunston Road,
Oakham,
Rutland.

Dear Ann,
Didier Pironi can now walk almost normally and he spends a good two hours a day working out in the gym. Once he is perfectly fit, he will think seriously about returning to F1. During his enforced lay-off he is looking after the family business and a power boat company, which he particularly enjoys as he deals mainly with the technical problems. The company is also the Lamborghini importer for France. Yet another job entails testing cars for a vintage car magazine and he is also working on a video film project. "I'm a much busier man now that I've stopped racing temporarily," he says. "I have many varied interests from which I'm experiencing a different sense of fulfilment because I'm in to things I don't know that much about and I find that my efforts are crowned with a certain amount of success." Didier's biggest motivation is, of course, F1, but not for the immediate future. His leg isn't sufficiently strong for that kind of strain. "I have organised my life so that the day I return to F1 I can stop everything instantly. But, first I have to prove that I am as competitive as before and that I can still win Grands Prix. My aim is to win the World Championship. It's impossible to say if I will return to Ferrari. F1 teams only take on drivers because of their skills. And for no other reason. If Ferrari takes me back it will because I have proved that I am as fast as before. As for 1985, I am convinced that it's going to be a far more exciting season than last year's, firstly because of Michelin's withdrawal and secondly, the close-season testing period has revealed tremendous improvements concerning the various teams' cars and engines." ***N.H.***

GPI — A DRAG?

Dear GPI,
Great magazine. My sport is Drag Racing. Would you please give regular information throughout the 1985 season. Look forward to your reply in Post Bag.
Yours faithfully,
Keith Bowen,
10 Park Avenue North,
Northampton.

Dear Keith,
There are only so many pages in GPI, 88 to be exact. Our next step forward will be to include an extra 8 pages on Formula One power boats starting next month. We do not have any plans to start covering Drag races in the near future. But who knows!
We do enjoy receiving readers' letters and we take note of all your suggestions — so keep them coming in!
Best wishes and sorry we can't oblige,
GPI

HOW ABOUT THIS THEN!

Dear GPI,
Ever since you made the mistake of changing your format between 1983 and 1984, I have only half-heartedly been receiving your magazine. Since GPI's inception into the world in 1979, I have always looked forward to the most exclusive and dedicated coverage of the most recent Grand Prix. But then you made the disgusting mistake of following the Rally scene, as well as linking up Endurance issues all into the magazine! Here in Australia your magazine is very expensive and we're paying for print we don't even read! After 3 months absence, you recommenced production of a much modified GPI! Which was even worse than the previous format! What the hell have road cars got to do with Grand Prix Racing! I think an excellent way of improving your magazine would be as follows:
3 magazines (approx 60-70 pages) every month,
1. Exclusively F1 with a couple of pages of F3000, F3 and world Indy events.
2. World Endurance Championship plus IMSA.
3. Rallying and Prestige tests.
An alternative change would be to drop the Prestige Tests and Rallying altogether and concentrate on F1 with F3000, F3, Endurance, IMSA and Indy car events as minor supplementaries.
Yours.
Mark Wicks
Creamery Road,
Yinnar, Victoria,
Australia

FAN MAIL

Dear GPI,
For the past couple of years we have been fortunate enough to attend the Dutch GP. Last year we took some good photos of the cars and drivers and sent them off to the teams to be signed together with a courteous letter.
I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ferrari and Michele Alboreto in particular for complying with our wishes. As for the two British teams we contacted (one of which did "rather well" last year) we realise the winter break is a very busy time for all teams, but how long does it take to sign a photo?
Part of the appeal of F1 is to identify with a team and follow their progress throughout the championship. So how about some teams giving their public relations more thought. Let's face it, next to the sponsors, the fans are the ones who keep the sport healthy. And we're not a bad lot, are we?
Yours faithfully,
Alwyn Crosford
and Richard Hamill,
18 Hilder Gardens,
Farnborough,
Hants.

TROLLS

Dear GPI,
We have noticed the rising tide of interest in F1 racing in the US over the past few years and the future is looking bright for a larger F1 following over here epecially with the 1985 entry of the Haas-Newman team.
To help the American audience get involved we suggest you give details on who the sponsors are. The average American has never heard of AGIP or SAIMA and probably thinks ELF is a troll-like creature! It would be helpful to identify the business of the sponsor (eg, Parmalat is an Italian dairy conglomerate), and may also provide the means of product identification for sales in America.
Sincerely,
Glenn Abello
and Arthur Corona,
625 Chelten Hills Drive,
Elkins Park, PA 19117

MAFIA

Dear GPI,
Is it true that Alain Prost was being prepared to win the 1984 drivers' championship title (not Lauda) within the McLaren team? I watched very closely in the paddock how the McLaren mechanics tuned up Niki Lauda's and Alain Prost's engines during the 1984 Dutch GP. It seemed to me that more attention was being paid to Prost's car and that's why he won.
Is there a 'Mafia' power involved. Who drives the McLaren team?
Adios
Untung Zulfikar,
The Hague.

Dear Readers,
These two columns are yours to vent your views and make your suggestions. Please write to: The Production Editor, Grand Prix International, 7 rue de Lille, 75007 Paris, France.

Niki Lauda (McLaren TAG Porsche)

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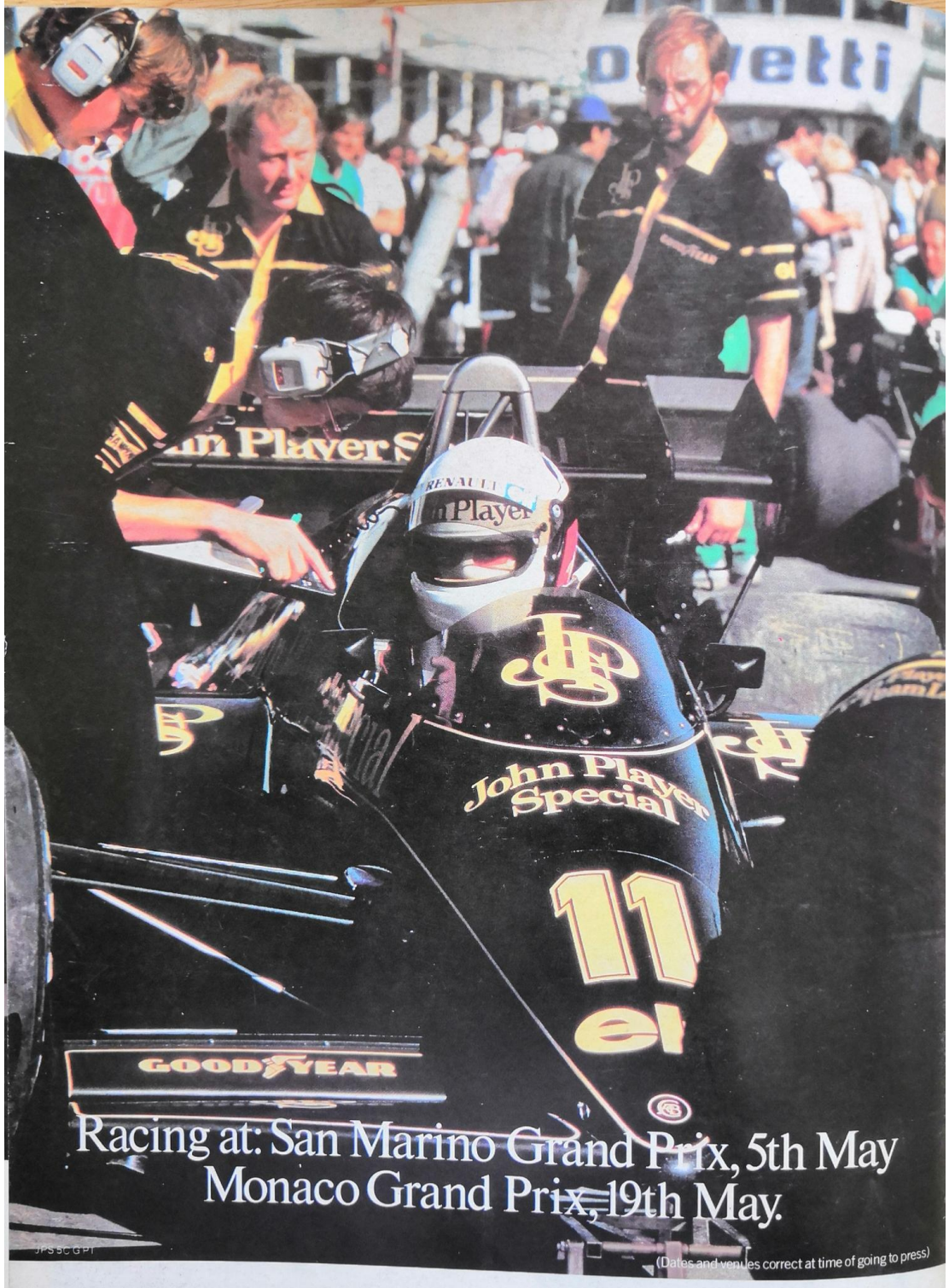

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